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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

VOLUME VI SPRING 1954 NUMBER 2

THE PLACE OF MYTHOLOGY IN *THE LUSIADS*

FRANK PIERCE

IT IS A surprising fact that a poem of the stature of Camões' epic, which has for so long been the subject of much comment and criticism, should still present a major problem of interpretation.[1] The problem may be put briefly: Camões envisages his theme from the comprehensive standpoint common to his age, that is, he sees human history as including and being ultimately justified by a divine plan; but this plan manifests itself through a whole pagan supernatural scheme inserted between Vasco da Gama and the Christian God. What does Camões mean by this unusual combination of elements not found in any of his contemporaries in the epos?[2] Most critics show at some point of their exegesis an uneasiness at the way the complicated pattern unfolds itself, and have never felt quite sure what the total picture of *The Lusiads* stands for. This is partly because Camões presents the reader with a new and startling relationship of the truth of history and religion and the familiar adornments of poetry. The uncertainty is also due, one must admit, to the great success of Camões in giving full sensuous life to his imaginative ideas (for he is surely one of the archseducers of all poetry).

[1] For example, W. C. Atkinson, in the introduction to his recent translation of *The Lusiads* (London, 1952), refers to "an inherent contradiction in the conception, of which the poet was himself as well aware as the most carping of his critics" (p. 22). The latter part of this statement is highly disputable.

[2] The blending of the pagan and the Christian was, however, not uncommon in other forms of poetry; mention can be made of Gil Vicente's play, *Cortes de Júpiter*, as one example, while Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis* is a famous case in another kind of narrative verse.

The present writer does not pretend to have discovered the one and only explanation, but he does believe that a more satisfactory and acceptable version of the question than that usually given can be arrived at by drawing attention both to the early criticism of *The Lusiads* and, also, to the sixteenth-century attitude towards pagan mythology and its use in the art of a Christian society. After a survey of the critical history of the subject, an attempt will be made to place Camões in the circumstances of theory and practice in which he wrote and, thus, to let him speak for himself. Perhaps it will then be possible to see how far his poem lives up to or falls below contemporary ideals of poetry, and to explain why it has caused such misunderstanding in the most important matter of his supernatural machinery.

I

Camões criticism really begins with the well-known statement of Frei Bertholameu [*sic*] Ferreira, censor of the Holy Office, approving the first edition of 1572:

> não achey ... cousa algũa escandalosa, nem contraria à fe & bõs costumes, somente me pareceo que era necessario aduertir os Lectores que o Autor pera encarecer a difficultade da nauegação & entrada dos Portugueses na India, vsa de hũa fiçao dos Deoses dos Gentios, E ainda que Sancto Augustinho nas suas Retractações se retracte de ter chamado nos liuros que compos ... aas Musas Deosas. Toda via como isto he Poesia & fingimento, & o Autor como poeta, não pretenda mais que ornar o estilo Poetico, não tiuemos por inconueniente yr esta fabula dos Deuses na obra conhecendo a por tal, & ficando sempre salua a verdade de nossa sancta fe, que todos os Deoses dos Gẽtios sam Demonios ...[3]

Here, within the few lines of a common legal formula, is expressed what to Camões and his contemporaries was a perfectly ordinary and accepted idea concerning the use of pagan myths in Christian poetry, but what would appear to be a concept of unusual difficulty and subtlety for the modern mind, trained as it is in a very different acceptance of the literary myth and the uses of symbols.

The next stage, surprisingly, is reached when (in the famous "Piscos" edition of 1584) the same censor (together with three others) makes this declaration: "assim emendado como agora vai, não tem cousa contra fé e os bõs costumes."[4] This short phrase is the justification for the extensive excisions of every reference to "gods" and "goddesses" and the substitution of their specific names or some short euphemism. There is also considerable expurgation in this edition in Canto II, where Venus is portrayed as imploring the help of Jupiter for the Portuguese and the poet describes her seductive charms in

[3] Reprinted in Camões' *Obras completas* (Lisbon, 1947) (Clássicos Sá da Costa), Preface and notes by H. Cidade, IV, lv. This is the edition cited in this article.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. xx.

most plastic detail; and the sensuous intensity of the scenes on the Isle of Love (Canto IX) is reduced by the suppression of whole stanzas. These modifications, clearly dictated by religious and moral scruples,[5] are those of specific relevance to the subject of this article (others suggested by political qualms do not concern us here).

The prudishness displayed in the 1584 edition was, however, quickly set aside, and is not typical of an age when the Church had yet again (after Trent) taken up a position of toleration regarding the use of mythology and had reaffirmed the most favored of the traditional attitudes, that of moral allegorism. Thus, the Jesuit censor of the 1595 edition restored for the most part the original text and reversed his predecessors' decisions:

> Não lhe borrei os vocábulos de que o Autor muitas vezes vsa e que já alguns lhe notaram, como falar em *deuses*... porque tal linguagem a autorizam as Escrituras e os Padres da Igreja, ao falar-se dos deuses do paganismo.

The edition of 1609 was the last one to bear any traces of retouching for moral reasons.[6]

It will now be apparent that *The Lusiads* during the first generation after its appearance was submitted to the new post-Renaissance critical canons, that it contained certain passages which to some people were questionable on grounds of propriety, but that it stood the test and emerged triumphant.[7] If any further proof is required, it can be found abundantly in the great Spanish commentary, *Las Lusiadas de Luis de Camoens comentadas* (1639) of Manoel Faria e Sousa, the most enthusiastic and intelligent of all the poet's critics and one who is often mentioned but, apparently, seldom consulted. This humanist brought the vast classical erudition and the keen awareness of a rich mind and imagination to the task of giving Camões' poem the serious attention generally devoted to the *Aeneid*. Faria interprets Camões' use of pagan mythology as part of the inclusive attitude of mind that could submit history (that is God, the world, man, and the Devil) to the transmutation of poetry, which as a "representacion" involves "encarecimiento" or "exageracion." That is, for Faria poetry is essentially rhetorical, and he thus sees Camões using his "adornos" to give full imaginative significance to the voyage of Vasco da Gama (as indeed the 1572 censor had also explained the use of myth): "por exageracion del poder de Dios le llamò Jupiter el poeta" (Tomo I, col. 196). Venus comes to allegorize the Guardian Angel and Bacchus to stand for the Devil; that is, the pagan gods are to be taken as rhetorical figures and as poetic vehicles

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. xx-xxiv.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. xxiv-xxvi.

[7] It is necessary to stress this last point in view of the distorted postromantic view of the literary Renaissance and its frequent application to Camões.

within an exclusively Christian scheme of things.[8] Faria e Sousa will be discussed in some detail below; for the moment it will be enough to emphasize the completeness of his allegorization of *The Lusiads*, and also to point out that such a critical approach, whatever its merits (and they are many), can become enmeshed in its own subtleties.[9] But at least Faria took the whole poem and presented a commentary which, on its own premises, explained everything and drew together the rich variety of Camões' imagination into a satisfying rational statement. As it stands, Faria's four-volume work remains the most substantial piece of Camões scholarship. It came out a bare sixty years after the first edition and, apart from being a magnificent tribute, crowns the critical appreciation of a generation that took its poetry very seriously.[10]

An intermediate stage between the enthusiasm for a restless and witty rhetoric such as we have in the case of Faria, on the one hand, and the restriction and restraint of a Voltaire, on the other, is provided by one of the theoreticians of *classicisme* (as distinct from the classicism of Spain, Portugal, and other countries), namely the Jesuit René Rapin, in his precise and elegantly written *Réflexions sur l'éloquence et la poétique* (1674). This work, published only a generation after Faria's commentary, contains a short survey of European vernacular literature, the achievements of which are rigorously tested by reference to the Aristotelian rules, already outlined and discussed, and are as often as not found wanting (Lope de Vega and Cervantes are among the few considered worthy of praise). Fr. Rapin includes *The Lusiads* in his judgments of the Renaissance epic and each mention brings fresh censure. Like most modern epics Camões's has "ny proportion dans le dessein, ny justesse dans la pensée, ny exactitude dans l'expression"; Camões is also castigated for his supernatural scheme: "le Camoëns, qui parle sans discretion de Vénus, de Bacchus, & des autres divinitez profanes dans un Poëme Chrestien"; and finally:

> Le Camoëns, qui est le seul Poëte héroique de Portugal, n'a pensé qu'à exprimer l'orgueil de sa nation, en son Poëme de la conqueste des Indes. Car il est fier & fastueux dans sa composition, mais il a peu de discernement & peu de conduite.[11]

[8] The extent to which Faria e Sousa was reflecting and continuing the sixteenth-century theories of moralism and allegorism may be appreciated in the now standard work of Jean Seznec, *La Survivance des dieux antiques: Essai sur le rôle de la tradition mythologique dans l'humanisme et dans l'art de la Renaissance* (London, 1940), especially pp. 75-108, and 223-245.

[9] See my two articles in *Bull. Hisp.*, LI, 381-406, LII, 191-228, in which I have examined allegorical comment on Balbuena's *El Bernardo* and its Italian models.

[10] Faria was in point of fact one of the last of a generation of humanists who brought their learning and enthusiasm to such modern classics as Ariosto and Tasso (see the first of the two articles mentioned in note 9). It should also be recalled that the defense of Camões called forth João Soares de Brito's *Apologia* (1641).

[11] The edition used is the collected *Réflexions* (Amsterdam, 1686), II, 162, 173, 179.

Thus, Camões was lumped with all those who experimented too freely with the rules as understood by the new orthodoxy of the French Academy. This was a thoroughgoing reassessment and, however narrowing and pedantic, still possessed considerable critical vitality. When the rules were taken over by succeeding generations in the eighteenth century, they became a mortiferous set of canons that extinguished all poetic originality and brought about the impoverishment of the imagination. This was already apparent when Voltaire, himself a pupil of the Jesuits and always loyal to their literary standards as illustrated by Rapin's writings, brought out his *Essai sur la poésie épique* (final form, 1742). Voltaire treats *The Lusiads* with summary justice, praising the episodes of Inês de Castro and Adamastor but condemning the supernatural machinery and the general shape and structure of the poem, which is only saved because "la poésie du style et l'imagination dans l'expression l'ont soutenu." As for the supernatural, he regards the allegorical interpretation (perpetuated in the commentary by Duperron et Castera to his French translation of 1735 mentioned by Voltaire) with ironic tolerance: "à la bonne heure je ne m'y oppose pas, mais j'avoue que je ne m'en serais pas aperçu. Cette allégorie nouvelle rendra raison de tout . . ."; he then goes on to pass final judgment: "A parler sérieusement, un merveilleux si absurde défigure tout l'ouvrage aux yeux des lecteurs sensés." In the circumstances this bigoted statement (which is of a whole with the treatment of other modern epic poets in the same essay) is a pretty fair example of one important section of eighteenth-century opinion, that is, its *avant-garde*, which tended to adopt a very negative, even reactionary attitude towards the imagination and its rights.[12] The trenchant assurance of the young poet of *La Henriade* became the fixed conviction of the old man of Ferney a lifetime later; in this matter, at least, the passage of fifty years (Voltaire's essay came out first, in English, in 1726) marked no intellectual development whatsoever.[13] It is not to be expected that the author of *The Life of Charles XII* would share Faria's view of history; nor could Voltaire project himself into the past (as post-1800 critics were to do), which would have been his only hope of understanding Camões, once his view of European humanism had become identified with the prud-

[12] There is a pleasing irony in Afrânio Peixoto's remark: "O divertido, insisto, é que o Santo Ofício, pela religião, seja liberal, e o anatema venha da Estética, pelo pio Voltaire . . .," *Ensaios camonianos* (Coimbra, 1932), p. 28.

[13] See Voltaire's letter of Oct. 2, 1776 to De Vaines: " . . . Cependant je reçois le *Camoëns* de M. de la Harpe . . . Je crois que c'est à vos bontés que je dois ce *Camoëns* et je vous en remercie, quoique je ne le crois pas tout à fait digne d'avoir été traduit de M. de La Harpe." The letter of Oct. 18, also to De Vaines, is even more revealing: "Je vous remercie du *Camoëns;* je ne l'avais jamais lu tout entier, et je crois encore que peu de gens le liront tout entier." Text in *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire* (Paris, 1882), vol. L. La Harpe's translation appeared in the same year of 1776; in it Voltaire's criticism of *The Lusiads* is defended.

eries of the *grand siècle*. Any suggestion of allegorism is scorned,[14] and any imaginative daring deprecated; thus he ridicules Camões' assumption that the king of Melinde knew of Homer and Virgil and Milton's depiction of Satan's army using cannons.

The eighteenth century was not, however, unanimous in this rigidity of taste, and it is this fact which puts the age outside any comfortable Voltairean generalization. Montesquieu spoke warmly, if briefly, of *The Lusiads*,[15] while contemporary translations into English and French argue an abiding interest for the polite reader.[16] More significant, however, is the polemic produced by Voltaire's criticism. In 1776 William Julius Mickle published his English translation of the poem (the first since Fanshaw's of 1655), and accompanied it with a critical apparatus and a show of erudition that make him a kind of eighteenth-century Faria e Sousa.[17] Mickle's presentation and criticism is still the most comprehensive and serious piece of Camões scholarship after the commentary of the preceding century. Its chief relevance to this article is his detailed attack on Voltaire,[18] and his own explanation of the mythological machinery (which is contained in his "Dissertation"). The several gross errors of fact in the first edition of Voltaire's essay are singled out for censure; and it is pointed out that the Frenchman's initial knowledge of *The Lusiads* was based only on a cursory reading of Fanshaw and, at best, on the prose translation of Duperron.[19] What annoyed

[14] Voltaire, in his *Essai*, had also found Tasso's *Allegoria universale*, which he wrote for the *Liberata*, "incompréhensible."

[15] "Les Portugais, naviguant sur l'océan Atlantique, découvrirent la pointe la plus méridionale de l'Afrique: ils virent une vaste mer; elle les porta aux Indes orientales. Leurs périls sur cette mer, et la découverte de Mozambique, de Mélinde et de Calicut, ont été chantés par le Camoëns, dont le poème fait sentir quelque chose des charmes de l'*Odysée* et de la magnificence de l' *Eneide.*" *Esprit des Lois*, Bk. XXI, Ch. xxi.

[16] There are those of Duperron et Castera and La Harpe already mentioned and in English that of W. J. Mickle.

[17] Mickle and Faria e Sousa were linked by the Morgado de Matheus (1817) for their erudite contributions to the study of *The Lusiads*. Apart from the Introduction and the extensive notes to the text, Mickle's *Lusiad* [*sic*] was preceded by essays on "The History of the Discovery of India," "History of the Portuguese Empire in Asia," "The Life of Camoens," "Dissertation on the Lusiad and Observations upon Epic Poetry," and an appendix from the Portuguese archives. This formidable presentation recalls the similar tributes to the *Orlando Furioso* in the sixteenth century. The edition of Mickle's work used for this article is that contained in Alexander Chalmers' *The Works of the English Poets from Chaucer to Cowper* (London, 1810), vol. XXI.

[18] Mickle has this to say: "And never, perhaps, was there such a random reverie, such a mass of misrepresentations and falsities as the whole of it [Voltaire's original essay, in English, 1726] exhibits. The most excuseable parts of it are superficial in the highest degree..." (Chalmers, XXI, 606, note 1). "Besides, whatever has the sanction of the celebrated name of Voltaire will be remembered and, unless circumstantially refuted, may one time, perhaps, be appealed to, as decisive, in the controversies of literary merit" (*ibid.*, p. 617).

[19] See Mickle's statement to this effect in Chalmers, XXI, 610.

Mickle keenly was the fact that "this criticism, though most superficial and erroneous, has been generally esteemed throughout Europe, as the true character of that poem."[20] Mickle gives his own cogent interpretations of Camões' supernatural machinery. We are asked to remember that this "like the machinery of Homer and Virgil . . . is also allegorical," a fact which he stresses frequently, and which, incidentally, can be misleading; for Mickle used the word in the loose humanistic sense to include pure allegory, symbolism, and personification. Still his statement that "the names of these deities became merely allegorical, such also ought to be the actions ascribed to them. And Camoens has strictly adhered to this rule" is a good enough answer to Voltaire. According to Mickle, Camões' Venus is portrayed as the symbol of Divine Love corresponding to her spiritual aspect as Urania (this, of course, had been the contention of Faria e Sousa, from whom it was taken by Duperron, whose commentary was closely followed by Mickle). At the same time we are told that "In the age of Camões, Bacchus was esteemed a real demon," and, thus, becomes a fitting symbol of the opposing forces. The right to use pagan mythology is upheld by an appeal to its prestige and antiquity. Putting Camões's machinery above that of any modern epic, Mickle summarizes his thesis thus:

> A truth of history is preserved, yet, what is improper for the historian, the ministry of Heaven is employed, and the free spirit of poetry throws itself into fictions which make the whole appear as an effusion of prophetic fury, and not like a rigid detail of facts given under the sanction of witnesses.

Mickle argues his case with a wealth of detail and example from ancient and modern literature, including *La Henriade,* which he uses as evidence against its author; the final conclusion is that *The Lusiads* is in certain respects the greatest of modern epics and one of the best ever written. Before leaving Mickle, it must be said, however, that he does not always argue fairly, but sometimes overstretches his case in order to defeat Voltaire's contentions. Thus, the action on the Isle of Love "is chaste as the first loves of Adam and Eve in Milton, and entirely free from that grossness . . . often to be found in Dante, Ariosto, Spenser, and in Milton himself." This is surely a piece of special pleading; it introduces unhelpful parallels and is not a fair answer to Voltaire. Mickle also holds that "in his machinery, as in his historical parts, there is no mixture of Pagan and Christian personages . . . It is the historical opposition or concert of Christian and Pagan ideas which forms the absurd, and disfigures a poem . . . this . . . has no place in the Lusiad." Again, the objection has not been properly met and Camões' original scheme has been oversimplified. Finally, Mickle briefly refers

[20] This and the following quotations from Mickle's "Dissertation" are found in Chalmers, XXI, 611-619.

to the "Pagan allegorical machinery" of *La Henriade,* arguing unjustly that Voltaire the poet fuses the two supernaturals, as in fact Camões does.

Thus Camões' genius had a clever and well-informed advocate in this English eighteenth-century man of letters, who, though committing himself to a few of the half-truths inevitable in all polemics, set aside almost all of Voltaire's arrogant and carping criticism. Mickle has something of the balance and the subtlety of Faria (there is no evidence that he drew directly on the latter's commentary, although he used his biography of the poet and often quotes Duperron, who repeats much of Faria's criticism). He may be said to represent English neoclassicism, which, when set against the French variety, is seen to be more liberal in its treatment of the imagination, to have a much less desiccated sensibility, and thus to stand at less distance from the fullness of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries of which Camões is such a commanding figure.

Naturally Mickle's generous apologia delighted Camões' compatriots, whose Gallophilia must have been greatly shocked by Voltaire's assessment of the "Portuguese Bible." In his second edition of the *Obras de Luis de Camões* (Lisbon, 1782), Fr. Thomás Joseph de Aquino translates most of Mickle's scholarly introduction. He takes evident pleasure at the manner in which the Englishman exposes "o orgulho, soberba, ignorancia, e falsidade do turbulento e revoltoso Voltaire" (p. 60), and, quoting also French and Italian critics, joins in the pious baiting of the great outrager of beliefs.[21] Echoes of Mickle appear as late as 1817 in the introduction to the famous early "scientific" edition of *The Lusiads* by the Morgado de Mateus, José Maria de Sousa Botelho, whose critical position is a mixture of patriotic opposition to Voltaire and to Boileau's precepts and a skeptical acceptance of Camões' machinery. A final echo of the soundness of Mickle's exposition is found in J. Aubertin's introduction to his English translation of 1878 (London). (It might be added that the literary war had produced a monograph in 1806, Araújo de Azevedo's *Memória em defeza de Camões contra M. de la Harpe.)*

The brave struggle of such worthy figures as Mickle against the prestige of Voltaire and what he stood for in literary criticism had its posthumous reward in the early nineteenth century, when romanticism, particularly in its vigorous German version, swept away the now moribund tyranny of French rationalism. The enthusiasm for the past and

[21] Fr. de Aquino had already in his first edition of the *Obras* singled out Voltaire for this judgment: "Foi Mr. de Voltaire hum homen summamente soberbo, cheio de vaidade, e que mal enfarinhado, ou para melhor dizer, com huma leve tintura das materias, e das Faculdades, orgulhosamente pretendeo no seu tempo passar pelo maior Critico, e por hum dos homens mais eruditos da Europa." "Discurso preliminar," reprinted in the second edition, p. 81.

the cult of art as a national phenomenon were very favorable to the study and enjoyment of all forms of epic poetry. Where the Voltairean categories had subjected the restless life of *The Lusiads* to a Procrustean frame and thus devitalized it, the new romantic ideas welcomed the work and quickly placed it in the center of their group of significant European classics (which, by the way, included the works of Calderón and Shakespeare, both in their way victims, too, of the French eighteenth century).[22] One can easily understand that this new school of European critical thought, which reacted as openly against the French eighteenth century as the latter had, in France, against the early seventeenth century, would admire in *The Lusiads* such daring as the choice of a new theme and a new kind of hero, in which Voltaire only saw something rather monstruous and loose. Possessed as they were of a fresh feeling for the epic and of the new revelation which we now know as the cult of history and the significant past, these romantics are largely responsible for our present appreciation of *The Lusiads*. What caught the imagination of critics like F. Schlegel was the varied symbolism of Camões' Venus and Bacchus, and the exciting role of Portugal as the herald of European world domination. This was the essence of *The Lusiads* for A. W. Schlegel and for Bouterwek and Sismondi, all of whom exalted the originality and unity of this fresh variation of the Virgilian scheme.[23] We can hardly be surprised that such a warmhearted revival is lacking in the wisdom of Faria's humanism and tends to look naive beside even the rather bookish learning of Mickle. The eighteenth century killed a lot of our literary heritage, but the nineteenth discovered much that was unknown to the preceding age. The limited perception, however, of this rehabilitation of *The Lusiads* shows itself in the too emphatic acceptance of the symbolism of the gods. These romantics gave the figures of the ancient pantheon an evaluation that was inconsistent with their essentially fictional nature; their failure to subordinate and keep Venus, Jupiter, or Bacchus within the bounds of Christian belief and history inevitably produced a relationship of near equality between mythology and the true supernatural (here Mickle was on safer ground than the romantics, because the eighteenth century made a clearer distinction between poetry and philosophy).

By 1850 Camões and the epic in general had begun to give way to the

[22] Use has been made here of Harri Meier's informative essay "*Os Lusiadas* no romantismo alemão," in his *Ensaios de filologia românica* (Lisbon, 1948), pp. 207-226.

[23] *Ibid*, pp. 223-225. For individual writers, see, for example, F. Schlegel's *Nachricht von einigen seltneren italienischen und spanischen Dichterwerken, nebst einer Charakteristik des Camoens...* (1803), and his *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur* (1815), Lecture XI; A. W. Schlegel's *Berliner Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst* (1801-04); J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi's *De la littérature du midi de l'Europe* (1813), Chaps. 37 and 38.

cult of the new narrative form, the novel; but in England, France, Germany, and elsewhere, Camões criticism repeated and held on to the discoveries and dogmas of the great age of romanticism, while new translations (including five into English) increased the area of currency for the poem.[24]

The last thirty years of the present century have witnessed a new and discriminating interest in the rhetoric and the imagery of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poetry, thus making it a propitious period for a reconsideration of *The Lusiads*. Apart from the constantly renewed act of faith which produces a stream of tributes from his fellow countrymen, Camões has been the subject of two recent studies which deserve special mention.

In the first (*From Virgil to Milton*, London, 1945), C. M. Bowra shows great sympathy for *The Lusiads* and undertakes an interpretation of the supernatural machinery which owes something to the canons of the nineteenth century: "Some might regard them [i.e., the gods] as devils or creations of the Devil. But the revival of learning had given them a new life" (p. 110). One of the chief endeavors of this scholar in his discussion of *The Lusiads* is to maintain the prestige of the pagan gods, and he is thus led to make such statements as: "the divinities stand for something not easily labelled but revealed in their actions" (p. 113), which is really a reflection of the romantic vision of Venus and Bacchus as symbolizing the clash of cultures. While it cannot be denied that "in his Pagan mythology Camões has found new symbols to display the real issues that he sees in Gama's voyage" (p. 114), a very latter-day conception of Renaissance man lies behind the contention that "their first claim on him is that after all they are the gods of his great love, the antique world" (p. 115); or, that "they are the forces which have created the best elements in European life as Camões knows it" (p. 116). To this last strange assertion he adds the confident conclusions:

[24] Wilhelm Storck (*Vida e obras de Luis de Camões*, Lisbon, 1897, p. 694) reflects a common nineteenth-century viewpoint: "Este dualismo entre o maravilhoso cristão e o gentílico não feria nem escandalizava de modo algum no século XVI, em plena renascença da antiguidade greco-romana, os espíritos meio pagãos da parte culta da sociedade..." Teófilo Braga (*Camões: A obra lírica e épica*, Oporto, 1911) echoes earlier opinion: "Pela sua vasta cultura humanista, Camões conheceu todas estas lendas alexandrinas..., em que se exprimia a expansão da cultura ocidental. Quando à empresa de Alexandre, cujas glórias os Romanos assimilaram aos seus triunfos, sucedia a acção vitoriosa dos Portugueses, que outro símbolo mais significativo da continuidade histórica poderia encontrar Camões para representá-la artísticamente?" Quoted by Cidade, *Luís de Camões*, II, 115. Afrânio Peixoto, as late as 1924, is repeating the ideas of Da. Carolina Michaëlis: "Camões, sôbre ser homem do Renascimento ou retorno ás fontes pagãs do Helenismo, emancipação da humanidade devota na humanidade do livre exame, e, portanto, complexiva de todos os conhecimentos e motivos de arte, tinha precisamente um tema cujo trato exigia as reminiscências pagãs" (see his *Ensaios camonianos*, p. 24).

In their own way and in their own place they are real. Camões believes in them and honours them. Free from the theological inhibitions of the Middle Ages and hardly touched by the Counter-Reformation, he works out his own way of bringing the Olympian gods into his poem [p. 116]... He equates Portugal both with Christianity and with the classical tradition. The Counter-Reformation and the Inquisition hardly touched him, and such small concessions as he made to them do not affect the character of his work [p. 138].[25]

This is either to ignore or not to know the relevant evidence given earlier in this article; it is also to attribute to Camões an attitude towards pagan mythology and the ancient world that may be typical of European poets since the days of French Symbolism but is in no way characteristic of the age of Camões. Professor Bowra finds Camões' performance unacceptable at only one point, namely the poet's final presentation of the gods in Canto IX. This will be discussed below; suffice it to say here that such disagreement is quite consistent with the English critic's reading of the whole supernatural element in *The Lusiads*.

The second recent study is Hernâni Cidade's monograph, *Luis de Camões*, II (Lisbon, 1950), which gives a rather more balanced (because better informed) statement of Camões' use of pagan mythology. The Portuguese scholar begins with a reminder that for Camões and his contemporaries history had a special definition: "...este maravilhoso é o que se considerava intrínseco á historia, parte integrante da realidade que é a sua substância" (p. 99). But, as against this, he goes on to repeat the nineteenth-century contention that the Renaissance saw the resurrection of the pagan myth as an overriding aesthetic force (neither Cidade nor Bowra seems to be aware that the Renaissance gave new life to an old tradition of moralism in literature). Nevertheless, for Professor Cidade Camões' mythological machinery is at most an "artifício aformoseador," and its problems can be discussed without throwing any serious doubt on the poet's final achievement, since it is Cidade's contention that the mythological is a layer which does not belong to the inner core of the poem, that is, to the voyage itself. In short, the mythological is used for the creation of rather ill-defined symbols and of the beautiful. It is not surprising, then, that Cidade should move along lines similar to those followed by Bowra, and that he should repeat the suggestion that the hand of the censor or the irony of the poet supplies the explanation of the "discrepancies" in the use of the supernatural. Thus, the pre-eminence of what we regard today as historical reality haunts this kind of criticism: Cidade cannot realize that *The Lusiads* is a full poetical and rhetorical vision (*not* version or transcript) of history. Although he underlines the importance of the sixteenth-century conception of history and attempts a subtler view of the subject than

[25] The same attitude (with special reference to the passages in Cantos IX and X dealt with later in this article) was adopted by the late A. F. G. Bell in *Luis de Camões* (Oxford, 1923), p. 91.

that given by the English critic, he never gets beyond a position of unsatisfactory skepticism:

> Camões exprime por símbolos a sua visão filosófica do Mundo ou do Homem, mas o Poeta nem sempre é pensador, frequentemente se contentando de ser artista, ou seja, criador de formas de beleza ou imitador de outras que o deslumbram, por mero interesse lúdico [p. 112].

Something is taken from the romantic heritage, but is tempered with the modern "aesthetic" outlook which is in reality the heir of Voltairean formalism.

As two outstanding representatives of modern Camões criticism, both Bowra and Cidade suppose that the given totality of *The Lusiads* has been artificially achieved, or that Camões is guilty of an inconsistency which can, however, be disregarded without making any substantial difference to what is held to be the poem's unity.[26] A rather steep descent is thus marked since the intoxicated days of early romanticism; the progressive corrosive of realism has driven the symbolical into the unreal retreat of art for art's sake.

II

In this survey an attempt has been made to show that only one thorough explanation of the supernatural scheme of *The Lusiads* and its connection with the whole poem has ever been attempted. Camões criticism since that time has followed the checkered course of several schools and outlooks; but Faria has not been surpassed in his formidable undertaking to meet squarely and faithfully the critical problems presented by the roving fantasy of the poet. What follows is an attempt to suggest how a fuller comprehension of Camões' ingenuity than that contained in the latest studies may be reached, in the hope that a greater measure of acceptance may be granted where so much enthusiasm already exists.

The mythological material of *The Lusiads* can be divided thus: (1) the series of episodes dealing with the Heavenly Council and the various effects of the decisions taken here on the progress of Vasco da Gama's voyage, in Cantos I, II, and VI; (2) Adamastor, Canto V; (3) the Isle of Love, the banquet with the Nereids, the nymph's prophecy, and, finally, the revelations of Tethys, Cantos IX and X. A further analysis can be suggested: (a) the Heavenly Council and the preparations for the Isle of Love belong together on the same plane; (b) the interventions of Venus and Bacchus in man's affairs stand on a level of their own; (c) Adamastor's appearance to the Portuguese is of

[26] A very reasonable rebuttal of the thesis that Camões's poem had been interfered with by the Inquisition or that he held views that could meet with its disapproval is given by A. E. da Silva Dias in his admirable edition of *The Lusiads* (Lisbon, 1916), pp. xxi-xxiii.

the same generic order as the episodes in Cantos IX and X, insofar as they all represent the actual meeting or coming together of men and supernatural beings; still, Adamastor and the Isle of Love also fall into (b) as interventions, while ultimately the poet creates yet another level of reality by declaring the episode of the Isle of Love to be pure allegory.

These analyses are enough to show that Camões' supernatural is of no simple kind but exists at different levels as it serves the requirements of this poetic voyage of discovery (thus is revealed the wisdom of Faria e Sousa in giving different explanations of a single personage as the occasion demanded). This fact in itself should warn against any easy interpretation of Camões' machinery. Moreover, the machinery is seen to be sufficiently dissimilar from (while it owes a lot to) its classical exemplars (chiefly Virgil's scheme) to make any close identification misleading. For instance, Vasco da Gama always prays and gives thanks to the Christian God, while His mercies are dispensed by Venus, who is unknown to Gama. Thus it may be seen that the poet indulges in an age-old division of the pagan pantheon and its subordination to the Christian Heaven and Hell;[27] further, the episodes in Cantos IX and X constitute a fusion of the human and the supernatural for which there is no clear parallel in ancient poetry with all its varied god-man relationship. It should, then, be at once clear that Camões has brought about a whole shift in the meaning and application of the mythological and has made it subserve a Christian theme. His mythology cannot be said to derive directly from classical antiquity. Camões's gods and goddesses move on three different planes: they exist in their unearthly abodes, they direct or intervene in the struggles of men, and they manifest themselves in recognizable human or humanized shape to the terror or pleasure of men. Also, these creatures invite two kinds of credence, that of the plastic and sensual literalness of the Venus-Jupiter scene and that of a clearly allegorical kind, as, for example, the supernatural direction of human history or the Adamastor episode. It will emerge from all this that to regard *The Lusiads* simply as symbolized history (as romantic criticism tended to do) would be to run the danger of setting up an unreal division within the one piece of poetry—on the one hand, historical facts versified (that is, dealt with through the humbler devices of metaphors and similes) and, on the other hand, the whole machinery that lifts the extrapoetic facts into the realm of the fantastic and the supernatural. It is surely juster to Camões to recognize, with Faria e Sousa, that the whole range of the performance—God, men, gods, symbols, allegories—is a poetic unity, and that his "history" is as rhetorical as his supernatural engines.

[27] I have attempted to trace the history of this syncretism, as it relates to the elaboration of Hojeda's *La Christiada*, in an article in *Estudios dedicados a R. Menéndez Pidal*, IV (Madrid, 1953), 469-508.

Camões introduces the supernatural in an entirely casual, "normal" manner:

> Da branca escuma os mares se mostravam
> Cobertos, onde as proas vão cortando
> As marítimas águas consagradas,
> Que do gado de Próteo são cortadas;
>
> Quando os Deuses no Olimpo luminoso,
> Onde o governo está da humana gente,
> Se ajuntam em concílio glorioso...
> (I, 19-20)

Thus it is an easy passage from the breezy realism of the first two lines to the classical metaphor and then to the Olympian region (which, for all its familiar Virgilian character, is soon to reveal itself in a new relationship to the Christian sentiments already expressed by the poet). So far we see nothing of the "superimposition" (as Professor Cidade calls it) of the divine plane on the human as if they were unconnected. There now follows, as every reader knows, a lengthy account (stanzas 21-41) of the Heavenly Council and of the argument, divisions, and decisions of the gods. This is all told with a felicitous use of flowing oratory and is made real by its lyrical and sensuous vigor. Nor does one really feel any sense of paradox or contradiction when Vasco da Gama makes an unequivocal confession of his Christian faith to the Sultan of Mozambique:

> A lei tenho daquele cujo império
> Obedece o visíbil e invisíbil,
> Aquele que criou todo o Hemisfério...
> Que padeceu desonra e vitupério,
> E que do Céu à Terra emfim deceu,
> Por subir os mortais da Terra ao Céu.
> (I, 65)

for this is not the Vasco da Gama of history but of poetry; and he is as far from his extrapoetic counterpart as are the "velas" and "proas" of the poem from the ships which King Manoel's admiral commanded in 1498. The reader, further, should be no less willing to accept the scene of Bacchus appearing in the guise of an African Christian and kneeling before an altar to convince the Portuguese visitors to Mombasa that they are among friends. This is the poet's comment:

> . . . e assi por derradeiro
> O falso Deus adora o verdadeiro;
> (II,12)

and this is how Faria e Sousa understands the double deception:

> el demonio, representado en Baco, segun claramente hemos enseñado, se fingiò Christiano, tomando la forma de vn hombre, y poniendose delante de vn altar, como que le honrava;... supone agora el poeta que Christo acaba de airarse

contra el... y le hace caer por tierra, y adorar el propio, lo que el no queria se adorasse de otro [Tomo I, cols. 384, 390].

Both Camões and Faria make no secret about Bacchus, who is not (as several critics would have it) simply the symbol of the hostile and uncivilized Orient, nor in this instance the subject of a "quaint fancy" (see Bowra, p. 112), but the Devil; and the identification is made all the more vivid by the deliberate allegorizing by means of personification of a very familiar figure from contemporary art and poetry. Bacchus, for a Christian poet, could exist on poetic African soil only as an incarnation of the Devil; that is, to make him "real" is to give him his doctrinally true character, just as in the Isle of Love Venus and her helpers when humanized must be declared theologically false and unreal.

The pattern, which has now departed some distance from Virgil, is further revealed when, as the unsuspecting Portuguese ships are about to sail into Mombasa and to their destruction, Venus, "a linda Ericina,"

> ...que guardando
> Andava sempre a gente assinalada,
> Vendo a cilada grande e tão secreta,
> Voa do Céu ao mar como ũa seta.
>
> Convoca as alvas filhas de Nereu,
> Com toda a mais cerúlea companhia...
> E, propondo-lhe a causa a que deceu,
> Com todas juntamente se partia
> Pera estorvar que a armada não chegasse
> Aonde pera sempre se acadasse.
> (II, 18-19)

Nereids and Tritons, with Venus presiding over the flagship, blow into the sails and put their shoulders to the sterns, and the fleet is saved when its course is changed at the last moment. Naturally, Vasco da Gama, perceiving the deceit of the Moslems, just as he is escaping from it, addresses his thanks to God:

> Bem nos mostra a divina Providência
> Destes portos a pouca segurança...
> Ó tu, Guarda divina, tem cuidado
> De quem sem ti não pode ser guardado!
> (II, 31)

and Venus

> Ouviu-lhe estas palavras piedosas
> ..., e comovida,
> Dentre as Ninfas se vai...
> (II, 33)

It is clearly not enough to allow this scene to pass with comments to the effect that "Venus is a sublime symbol, but she is still a goddess" (Bowra, p. 115), or that Camões portrays her "in the spirit of the Italian Renaissance" (*ibid.*). Cidade's comment is shrewder:

A deusa autora do favor que ele agradece à *Divina Guarda* é ainda quem lhe ouve a precè que à mesma Divina Guarda o herói dirige. Poderia supôr-se que, sob esta designação assim vaga, que tanto podia aplicar-se a Deus como a Vénus, o Poeta quisesse evitar que a contradição ideológica fosse pôsta em evidência pela diferença nominal... [*op. cit.*, 103].

The Portuguese critic also says that "Camões *viu* o episódio, nítido, na imaginação" (p. 117), but he is aware of the need to see beneath the shining surface of the picture with all its intense plastic appeal. This is no ordinary mythological Venus, but a new Venus who is part of a scheme which includes God and man. One of the poet's historical sources is of direct help here: Castanheda, speaking of the incident, tells how Vasco da Gama, "Não querendo nosso Senhor que os nossos ahi acabassem como os mouros tinhão ordenado," by a chance stopped his ships in time to avoid a reef and in this way the fleet turned about and sailed out.[28] There can be little doubt about the poet's meaning; God saved the Portuguese from disaster and Camões envisages Venus and her assistants as His agents, that is, as the poetic, rhetorical, expression of Providence. (A little later on, Canto II, 60-65, Jupiter sends down Mercury to warn Vasco da Gama, who once more thanks God for it.) The danger here as elsewhere is to take the literal layer of meaning as the only one or as the main one, whereas the whole mythological machinery exists as a colorful illustration or "adorno" of underlying Christion truth.[29] Camões, then, re-creates the historical facts by making Vasco da Gama an epic hero (as Mickle put it), attributing to him things he would or could have done. It makes little difference if the poet departs from or adheres to the detailed historical record; for he is telling another "history," that of poetry, of which the pagan gods are just as much a part as they are *no* part of extrapoetic history. That is to say, these gods in actual history can only be false gods or the Devil; they

[28] Quoted by E. A. da Silva Dias in his note to II, 24.

[29] Faria e Sousa, for whom Venus and the Nereids here stand for Christian Faith and the Virtues, respectively, makes this comment on the escape of the Portuguese: "el poeta por mostrar que lo era, lo refiere como milagro poeticamente, fingiendo que la Religion y los Angeles acudieron a librar los navegantes y por exagerarlo lo disfraça con Venus i las Nereydas, por mostrar con la mezcla de las fabulas que fue aquel suceso una verdad no verisimil; una cosa estupenda i un favor divino raro" (Tomo I, col. 412). A modern reader may not find it easy to allegorize all the details in this way; it might help to draw attention to the prevalence of allegory in contemporary painting, such as in the canvases of Titian, "Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto" and "Allegory of Religion Succored by Spain," and Rubens' "The Triumph of the Eucharist." Faria indicates at various places that he had such a comparison with the plastic arts in mind; it is surely more logical to go in the direction of allegory than to give a significance to mythological details that will grant an independence to Venus which she cannot possibly possess in the poem. The modern reader will also find Mickle's and Duperron's remarks on this passage a halfway house to Faria (see Chalmers, XXI, 642, notes 4 and 5). The "fermosa Dione" of II, 33 is translated by Mickle as "celestial Love."

have, however, another meaning within poetry, and Camões has given them a high place in his symbols by making them serve the Christian supernatural. If one remembers, then, that poetic truth is only part of the greater truth, one will also see that the former cannot be identified with the latter but rather is a special aspect of it. This is surely what our poet meant at the outset when he said:

> Ouvi, que não vereis com vãs façanhas,
> Fantásticas, fingidas, mentirosas,
> Louvar os vossos, como nas estranhas
> Musas...
>
> (I, 11)

Camões, however elusive his mythological scheme may at times appear, can have been in no doubt as to what he intended it to mean. The gods for him belong to truth only insofar as they have certain poetic meanings; otherwise they are empty fictions, pagan and diabolical.

Venus no sooner rescues her beloved Portuguese at Mombasa than she betakes herself to the presence of Jupiter, where there occurs a scene of the utmost verbal evocativeness (it should be recalled that it suffered from expurgation in the "Piscos" edition of 1584). This passage, if taken literally (that is, in isolation), must for all its shimmering beauty be described as a scene of marked voluptuousness with decided touches of lubricity (especially in Canto II, 37). Here we are back on Olympus, that is, for the moment in an apparently closed pagan world, and again Camões exerts his great lyrical charm and is likely to make the reader momentarily forget the interlocking supernatural scheme he is in the process of unfolding. A review of the rise and fall of comment on this famous passage reveals the changing viewpoints of Camões criticism and throws some fresh light on the use of the supernatural in *The Lusiads.*

Faria e Sousa, with the authority of the Song of Songs behind him, and his belief that the whole poem should be understood as serious and uplifting verse, consistently allegorizes every detail and rejects the suggestion that the scene is immodest. The nakedness of Venus before Jupiter is an admirable device because "el poeta quiso mostrar que nuestra religion es clara" (Tomo I, col. 424) and, also, we stand naked before God. Venus can also be taken for the Virgin or the Spouse, that is, the Church or Religion (since for Faria Jupiter here stands for Christ, and any other interpretation is absurd). At this point, however, Faria begins to show a certain uneasiness about the textual evidence: "confessamos que el Poeta mezclò (pero con inimitable destreza) alguna cosa de los humanos para inclinar al gusto de los que leen..." (col. 431); but he proceeds bravely to allegorize Venus's limbs ("los valientes martires i doctores que... se llaman columnas de la religion"), and even more intimate parts of her body. A slight doubt remains concerning the pro-

priety in "un poeta circunspecto y Catholico" of such frank detail. But the commentator again decides in favor of the poet, who, he says, avoids communicating the mysteries too easily to the vulgar eye: "los grandes hombres estan licenciados por la ciencia (singularmente Poetica . . .) para vsar de cualquier atreuimiento, como no sea contra la Fe . . . " (cols. 436-437). Venus, he concludes, is guiltless as represented since she stands for Faith and not the pagan goddess who cuckolded Jupiter. (Faria does for this passage what generations of commentators had been doing for the *Metamorphoses* with their *Ovides moralisés*).

Attention has already been drawn to Voltaire's judgment of the allegorical interpretation and his treatment of Camões' supernatural in general, attitudes for which he would find justification among the writings of such preceptists as Rapin. The latter (as Voltaire was to do later) refused to accept Tasso's allegory of the *Liberata* and regarded this interpretation as a "chimaera" (see edition cited in note 11, II, 164).

A fitting gloss on Faria's exposition is, however, provided by Mickle, who quotes in translation the statement of Duperron et Castera on the scene:

> I am aware of the objection, that this passage is by no means applicable to the celestial Venus. I answer once for all, that the names and adventures of the Pagan divinities are so blended and uncertain in mythology, that a poet is at great liberty to adapt them to his allegory as he pleases. Even the fables, which, to those who penetrate no deeper than the rind, may appear as profane, even these contain historical, physical, and moral truths, which fully atone for the seeming licentiousness of the letter . . . [Chalmers, *op.cit.*, XXI, 645, note 10].

Mickle himself then has this to say: "The poet's assertion, and the taste of the age in which he wrote, sufficiently vindicate the endeavor to unravel and explain the allegory of the *Lusiad*" (*ibid.*, note 12). Duperron reflects Faria, while Mickle has enough understanding and imagination to see the usefulness, even the necessity, of reading poetry in more ways than one. These quotations offer an explanation where Faria e Sousa brooked no questioning. The Portuguese commentator at times chose to allegorize where the allegory need not be applied to every detail. The virtue of the figurative interpretation is that several alternatives may be available; the weakness of the method is the failure to realize that the literal need not have a full or exact correspondence with the figurative sense in every case. Camões' poem is a rich field for the allegorist; one is not so much struck by the ingenuity of Faria in tackling it as by the large measure of consistency and coherence made possible by the actual poetic text.

What was for Faria an example of rhetorical exaggeration became for generations with other definitions of poetry something either unacceptable in its totality or in certain ways inexplicable. The romantics, however, do not appear to have been unduly worried by such passages

as the one here under discussion (although they were aware of the problem involved); according to critics like F. Schlegel, Camões was merely exercising his birthright as a Renaissance man in drawing on the rich emotive and symbolical qualities of such a figure as Venus.[30]

Little change of emphasis seems to have taken place in the last one hundred years, for Professor Bowra is satisfied with the following explanation:

> The protectress of Portugal is still the goddess of love and beauty, and the poet is proud that his country should be favoured by her. So when she visits Jupiter ..., Camões is more daring even than the Roman poets in making her display her naked beauty without any false shame... [p. 115].

This passage is followed by the first of the two conclusions quoted above (p. 107). For Professor Cidade the scene has a similar significance: "Nestes episódios o Poeta é sobretudo artista, preocupado de arranjo de acção fantástica e de beleza..." (p. 115).

It can be held that the interpretation of this passage initiated by Faria is not essential to any real understanding of *The Lusiads*, and that the position of Bowra and Cidade allows for a generous appreciation of Camões' plastic imagery and his symbolism, while at the same time the reader is not tied to a close correspondence of symbol and symbolized. One sympathizes and shares the modern enjoyment of the enchanting vividness of such a scene as the one between Venus and Jupiter. One must still, however, attempt to relate it to whatever comprehensive symbols one believes to belong to the poem (and the uncommented *Lusiads* demands that its level of meaning be sought). When this is done, it will be seen that Venus is no longer the pagan goddess in all her poetic literalness, but that she must, on all the evidence, be given a decidedly figurative interpretation.

The Adamastor episode is included among the passages chosen for discussion here because it has always been hailed as one of the poet's greatest achievements, and because its very straightforwardness serves as an admonition not to use it as a yardstick for the whole supernatural scheme. The poet could hardly have presented his monstruous creature with greater clarity:

> Eu sou aquele oculto e grande Cabo
> A quem chamais vós outros Tormentório...
> Aqui toda a africana costa acabo
> Neste meu nunca visto promontório,
> Que pera o Pólo Antártico se estende,
> A quem vossa ousadia tanto ofende;
> (V, 50)

[30] See F. Schlegel, *Nachricht von einigen seltneren italienischen und spanischen Dichterwerken, nebst einer Characteristik des Camoens*, and H. Meier, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

this declaration, when coupled with his ancestry, gives him at once complete and convincing stature:

> Fui dos filhos aspérrimos da Terra,
> Qual Encélado, Egeu e o Cantimano;
> Chamei-me Adamastor, e fui na guerra
> Contra o que vibra os raios de Vulcano.
> (V, 51)

All the proposed literary parallels and sources (e.g., the River Xanthus, Polyphemus, and Atlas) can do little but invest this creation with superfluous and superficial pedigrees, for in Adamastor we have a triumphant justification of Camões' use of mythology.

Faria e Sousa musters his erudition (including some "philological" identification of Adamastor and Mahomet), but he merely underlines (and at times blurs) the original clarity of the text. Adamastor, he says, stands for the Cape, since all the giants were sons of Earth. Voltaire's praise is sparing but pointed: "Cela est grand en tout pays sans doute." Duperron, as elsewhere, follows Faria and makes much of Adamastor as the personification of Mohammedanism. Mickle endorses this reading but will not go along with Duperron in seeing in the monster "an exact description" of the Prophet himself. For the Englishman "the fiction of the apparition of the Cape of Tempests, in sublimity and awful grandeur of imagination, stands unsurpassed in human composition" (Chalmers, *op.cit.*, p. 682, note 19), bowing only before Job's description of the descent of the Angel of the Lord or St. John's apocalyptic vision. Bowra and Cidade, each in his own terms, do little more than restate this unanimity of opinion:

> Adamastor is convincing because he is related to fact and because his forecasts belong to history... Just as Bacchus symbolises the difficulties which the Portuguese meet on their journey to the East, so Adamastor symbolises a natural obstacle, the passage round the Cape of Storms, the point where East meets West and disasters are common... [pp. 124-125].

> Amassar num mito formidoloso estas sombras trágicas de fatalidade, pôr em voz horrenda, com ameaçadoras profecias, ásperas palavras que ressoassem como tormentas desencadeadas, eis a concepção poética... [p. 124].

Camões has conceived Adamastor as a pure personification which, because it is irreducible and can withstand other figurative accretions, remains unchangeable for all generations. As stated above, Adamastor also "meets" men, as Tethys and her nymphs do later, but he exists in "history" in a way impossible for them. Adamastor allegorizes simply as Evil in some form and does not require to be allegorized away.

Finally, there is the most discussed of all Camões' mythological scenes, the Isle of Love, the subsequent banquet, and the prophecies in Cantos IX and X. A short synopsis may be useful at this point:

Venus decides to reward her Portuguese navigators as they are on

their way back from Calicut through the Indian Ocean. Enlisting the aid of Cupid, who uses his arrows to good effect, she succeeds in arousing desire in the goddess Tethys and the Nereids (Venus herself was sprung from the sea), and they are conducted to an island of paradisiacal delights and beauty. Hither the Portuguese are directed and here they land to enjoy the fruits of their labors (Vasco da Gama has Tethys and each sailor his corresponding nymph). The poet then explains, in an important passage (IX, 89-95), that this scene is an allegory of reward and fame. There follows the magnificent banquet of the humans and their sea nymphs, after which, one of them, instructed by Proteus, foretells the glories of the Portuguese empire in India. Later Tethys herself leads her lover Gama to the highest point of the island. Here she explains that "a grande máquina do mundo" is the work of the great God, and that she, Saturn, Juno, Jupiter, and Janus are mere fictions of man made only "pera fazer versos deleitosos," and that Jupiter is to be taken here to stand for Providence (X, 80-83). Tethys then proceeds to show Vasco da Gama the wonders of the (Ptolemaic) universe, and unfolds the continents of Africa and Asia where the Portuguese will win fame; the martyrdom of St. Thomas the Apostle and Camões' own shipwreck on the River Mekong are among the events described. The Portuguese then depart from the Isle of Love and proceed on their journey home.

As with the episode of Adamastor, the poet here reminds the reader of many classical and other parallels (for example, Calypso's island, Alcinous' garden, Virgil's Elysium, Alcina's abode); but, as before, the absorption is complete and comparisons really serve to bring out Camões' originality. The scene from Canto IX recalls that of the meeting of Venus and Jupiter for its plasticity and sensuousness of detail; the Isle of Love has also occasioned differing interpretations and has been the subject of praise and blame.

A sharp division of opinion as to the meaning and propriety of the Isle of Love is seen from the very beginning. In the expurgated "Piscos" edition whole stanzas were omitted. Faria e Sousa, as might be expected, defends the passage against objectors:

> nuestro poeta, pareciendo que se engolfa en lascivias por todo este canto, mandandonos, que sepamos quitar el velo a su profundo disponer, y enseñar, viene a ofrecernos convertida en gloria verdadera toda esa invencion con que nos lleva por esta deliciosa isla [Tomo IV, col. 23].

Cupid must, he insists, be seen here as "divino Cupido," just as the Venus of *The Lusiads* is the higher not the lower one. Finally, when the love-making is over and Camões makes his declaration in IX, 89, Faria feels jubilant justification for his general interpretation:

> viendo el poeta que podian dudar algunos de que el introduxesse estas ninfas i

aparentes delicias en sentido alegorico, le pareció declararse tanto, como aqui lo hace; diciendo que las Ninfas, i la Tetis, y la Venus, y la isla descritas, todo es fingido, y que no significa mas de la Fama, y gloria con que las Virtudes o Valor heroico que nuestros navegantes amaron i exercieron, los vinieron a aplaudir... Luego la alegoria que desde el principio deste poema seguimos, no es fantasia nuestra... [Tomo IV, col. 268].

The complete contrast to this attitude presented by French classical opinion can here be registered, since Voltaire chose to comment on this passage:

Camoëns... s'avise d'informer le lecteur que toute cette fiction ne signifie autre chose que le plaisir qu'un honnête homme sent à faire son devoir. Mais il faut avouer qu'une île enchantée dont Vénus est la déesse, et où des nymphes caressent des matelots après un voyage de long cours, ressemble plus à un musico d'Amsterdam qu'à quelque chose d'honnête...

Clearly, Camões' accomplishment (as most probably in other episodes of the poem) is entirely lost on Voltaire, whom the poet has failed to convince. His basic comparison and accusation of immodesty implies an insincerity of intention on the part of the poet.

At no point of his commentary does Mickle spring so fiercely to the defense of Camões as when writing of the Isle of Love. Voltaire, himself the creator of a Temple of Love in *La Henriade*, IX, writes in ignorance, his accusations being "the arrogant assertions of the most superficial acquaintance with his works, a hearsay, echoed from critic to critic"; other modern poets have used similar scenes, yet Camões "has given less offence to true criticism"; the behavior of Camões' nymphs "is that of the virgin who hopes to be the spouse," and "the nuptial sanctity draws its hallowed curtains, and a masterly allegory shuts up the love-scenes of Camoens." The good Mickle, with all his erudition and tolerant definitions of poetry, displays in his defense of Camões' sensuousness a naïveté unknown to Faria, whose work is characterized by a far freer sense of relationships. (Mickle, in translating this and other mythological scenes, gives a characteristically eighteenth-century gloss to Camões' sensuous details.)

Mickle's well-argued case again met response as late as 1817 from the Morgado de Matheus, who continued to perceive the delicacy and the value of the allegory. What caused dispute in the later nineteenth century, however, was the problem involved in the ready acceptance of the Isle without the figurative meaning attached to it. Thus, Sir Richard Burton, in his famous *Commentary* on the poem (1881), reflects a contemporary interest in locating the real geographical model for the Isle of Love. A modern critical trend of more relevance to this article casts doubt on the poet's declarations in Cantos IX and X; such passages to the modern reader, who believes that pagan myths have, in poetry, an inalienable value and significance, are tantamount to a surrender of the

whole illusion.[31] We are back again to the conflict between the older and the modern meanings of symbolism, except that in this present case the problem is solved by rejecting the offending stanzas and attributing them to outside influence. Such contentions would appear to be lacking in any real evidence, but they still find support. Thus Professor Bowra thinks Camões "inconsistent" in giving his two explanations in the last two cantos. Stanza 91, Canto IX, he finds "worse than an anticlimax; if we treat it seriously, it spoils much of the poem" (p. 117). The censor's intervention is again suggested, and we are told that the poet's explanation "should not be treated as his last word"; on the other hand, if, as Camões says in X, 83,

> Jupiter is Divine Providence and God works through second causes, Camões's gods and goddesses are neither fictions nor allegories nor famous men and women of the past but celestial powers who . . . carry out the commands and will of the Supreme Being [Bowra, p. 119].

Later on, Bowra reflects on the unsatisfactory nature of the Isle of Love itself:

> the poem moves in a world of pure imagination where ethical distinctions count for little . . . His allegory is not entirely convincing . . . It is the price he has to pay for allowing his heroic poem to contain a theme which belonged to the different world of chivalrous epic [p. 130].

It is interesting to note that this modern criticism is up to a point in agreement with Voltaire's views, except that such moderns as Professor Bowra accept the mythological scene as in some sense valid for them. In other words, the romantic belief in the general symbolism of the poem still holds good but is accompanied by some of the earlier skepticism about allegorism.[32] The English critic's position derives

[31] The question as to whether the censor's hand may be seen in these passages was discussed as far back as Francisco M. Leoni's monograph *Camões e 'Os Lusiadas'* (Lisbon, 1872) (for which see H. Cidade, *op. cit.* p. 103). A very recent statement of the case against the censor, B. Ferreira, and his supposed intervention is contained in two essays in *Camões, Camilo, Eça e alguns mais*, 4th. ed. (Lisbon, 1949), pp. 11-35, by the novelist Aquilino Ribeiro, who argues eloquently but unconvincingly that the passages in Cantos IX and X are untypical and, therefore, cannot be a true part of the whole inspiration and spirit of the poem. Such a view, which is based upon a definition of the poetic Renaissance as something "pagan," is entirely out of sympathy with any serious explanation of allegory as involving the syncretism of pagan and Christian terms and symbols. A. F. G. Bell's contribution has already been mentioned (note 25 above). It should be added, as against these critics, that both Sir Richard Burton and Afrânio Peixoto (*op. cit.*, pp. 28-31) are among those who have accepted the textual evidence as valid. See also note 26 above.

[32] H. Cidade, *op. cit.*, p. 109, questions Bowra's thesis and suggests something more reminiscent of Faria's position: "nos não custa admitir que haja o Poeta, por espontânea iniciativa, sacrificado o mito à lição moral ou á verdade científica, quando reconheceu que se opunham"—that is to say, that Camões adopted the mediaeval attitude toward myth which derived from Euhemerus' "historical" theory. See also p. 105, and Cidade's note to IX, 91-92, in Vol. V of the *Obras* (Lisbon,

logically from the assumption that Camões grants a place of honor to the gods and goddesses consistent with what a humanist's love of antiquity is supposed to have been. Any suggestion, therefore, that the creatures of mythology are less than divine can only be answered by excluding that part of the textual evidence that contradicts this general reading of the poem.

As before, an alternative explanation, deriving from the comprehensive exposition of Faria e Sousa, suggests itself. For the first time, in Cantos IX and X, Vasco da Gama and his sailors meet with supernatural creatures of flesh and blood. Some new explanation therefore is called for to make this situation fit into the mythological pattern of the rest of the poem. It would seem that Camões at this point had reached the limit of his inventiveness and could save the situation only by having recourse to pure allegory. By declaring that Tethys and the Nereids are nothing but fictions, Camões puts a strain on the understanding, since he is also reducing or changing the reality of his historical figures by associating them with personifications of Reward and Fame. His allegory, nevertheless, does keep this whole scene attached (if with a certain tenuousness) to the main body of the poem, and the figurative or doctrinal reading of the whole poem remains uniform. One can feel disappointed, with Bowra, at the inconsistency between the adequacy of the scene in itself and for itself, on the one hand, and the poet's necessity to keep his overrich fantasy within certain outer rational bonds. It can also be contended that such mythological material has no proper place in an epos (and this is a strong argument); but, if the scenes must be inserted, then the mythological creatures can only be what their fellows are in the rest of the poem. In fact, the gods and goddesses could have no other meaning in *The Lusiads* than that which they are granted when Tethys says:

> ... eu, Saturno e Jano,
> Júpiter e Juno, fomos fabulosos,
> Fingidos de mortal e cego engano.
> Só pera fazer versos deleitosos
> Servimos.
> (X, 82);

because, in the heaven of which she speaks,

> Aqui, só verdadeiros, gloriosos
> Divos estão...
> (*Ibid.*)

An ending that would in some felicitous way draw the different planes together was probably required in such a curiously mixed work as *The*

1947). This explanation is, of course, no new thing (see, e.g., E. A. da Silva Dias, who makes the same comment on X, 82).

Lusiads. A humanism that can accept a blend of the epic and the allegorical will find in the Isle of Love a solution that is particularly appropriate (for Mickle it is an ending of outstanding merit), although it can be argued that Camões' consistency to the body of belief that animated his mythological creatures has done some violence to the structural subtleties of his main theme. On the other hand, a classicism which clings to the Virgilian narrative as a norm will find these closing scenes in *The Lusiads* both unassimilable and inharmonious. Here we have in a nutshell the critical problem of Camões's great poem.

Conclusion

The Lusiads is a work of sufficient grandeur of scheme and subtlety and suppleness of treatment to satisfy readers holding various conceptions of poetry and of its function. Indeed, the critical history of the work can be said to be in microcosm that of the development (or degeneration) of European sensibility over the last four hundred years. The totality of the poem has suffered alike from the contractions and expansions of successive generations of taste. It must, however, be stressed that there *is* an orthodoxy of interpretation, and that this can best be found in the commentary of Faria e Sousa, who had such an exalted opinion of the poet's achievement that he granted it all the acceptance necessary to explain it in its entirety.

That Faria e Sousa has been neglected cannot be denied. The corollary of this is that he presents a view of poetry that may not at first be acceptable to us. It is necessary to speak of allegory as well as of symbol to understand Camões' intention, although both Faria and his followers may use the term "allegory" in the imprecise humanistic sense which covers most forms of figurative meaning.[33] From this it follows that the *Aeneid* alone is not a sufficient model by which to judge the pattern of *The Lusiads*, since Camões does not simply take over the mythological scheme but, in the manner of his contemporaries, makes the ancient pantheon acquire a new meaning. Thus, the pagan gods are personifications, with allegorical traits, of forces at work between God and men; and it is only when men come face to face with the creatures of myth that their meaning in poetry (i.e., fictions) and in life (i.e., false gods) must be made explicit. To submit the gods and goddesses to this new reduction of their original poetic meaning does not in any serious way deprive them of their familiar appeal. It merely calls for a new focusing of the view of the epos and of its traditional elements.

Camões, following the example of Lucan, has drawn on recent history, but he has then proceeded to make it co-exist with his new allegori-

[33] This is one of the main points discussed in my articles mentioned in note 9 above.

cal or symbolical myth, backed by the Christian supernatural.[34] Given the Christian concept of human history, any non-Christian supernatural can only find a place in the scheme of things as a serving and subordinate element, not in its own right. Thus, Christian history is allegorized with the help of the pagan gods (as the censor of 1572 saw clearly); these gods, for the moment, take on an honorary and, with the exception of Bacchus, an honorable role as the rhetorical expressions of Providence, the forces of Christian virtue and endeavor. By thus "Christianizing" it, Renaissance man rescued pagan mythology from the condemnation of his doctrinal beliefs.

To do full justice to Camões and to ourselves, it should be added that the passage of four centuries has caused changes in the understanding of concepts common to both Camões and ourselves. It should be emphasized that certain attitudes of the sixteenth-century mind are strange to us if not beyond our comprehension. To this extent our appreciation of a poem like *The Lusiads* will be limited. While it is not fruitful to cast blame (Camões has more than once been the victim of his critics), it has to be conceded, in all fairness, that the poet himself sinned on the side of surrender to the urgent dictates of his imagination. In spite of his advocates, one cannot completely set aside the adverse criticism of some of his richer fantasies. A poet of his vigor and originality was bound to present problems even for his own age. There is, then, a certain logic connecting the thought of the censors of 1584, Fr. Rapin, Voltaire, and even Bowra, who felt defrauded when told by Camões that he must allegorize what for Bowra was a scene sufficient to itself. Camões, who speaks of the "engano" associated with the gods, may be said to practice it himself on his devoted readers. His skill and inspiration are, however, of such an order that he continues to win and hold different kinds of people in his spell. As long as the epos has a meaning for the serious student of poetry, so long will *The Lusiads* require close attention.[35]

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[34] Camões, however, avoids the mistake of Tasso in too closely identifying the deeds of the crusaders with God's will as expressed in his explicitly Christian supernatural. The interposition of the pagan mythological scheme thus has its multiple purposes. In this way it was possible to preserve the form of the ancient epos; otherwise the only solution was the *poema sacro* (see addendum to my article referred to in note 27 above).

[35] My best thanks are due to my former colleague T. E. May for taking notes for me from the copy of Faria e Sousa's commentary in the B. N. Madrid, and to the Sheffield University Research Fund for its financial help. I wish also to thank T. P. Waldron (Manchester) for his kindness in lending me some works by Peixoto and Cidade used in this article.

GREATNESS AND DECLINE OF THE BOURGEOIS: DRAMAS BY SCHILLER AND DUMAS

OSKAR SEIDLIN

WE KNOW that "Marguerite Gautier" is only a stage name, a pseudonym for Marie Duplessis, who, as one of the brightest stars in the sky of the Parisian demi-monde, inspired the author of *La Dame aux Camélias* no less than she was to inspire, a little later, Théophile Gautier and Franz Liszt. For her contemporaries, Marguerite Gautier and Marie Duplessis became so indistinguishable that, in a niche of the tombstone of the real Parisian *grisette*, a wreath of artificial camelias was sealed in order to identify her forever with her glamorous sister on the stage. In 1848—the year of the publication of Dumas' novel from which the play was to be drawn—everyone in Paris knew that Marguerite Gautier and Marie Duplessis were one and the same. And yet it may be that Marguerite has quite a different ancestry as well, that she borrowed traits from a literary model no less than from a living one, and that her real sister is not buried under a wreath of camelias in the Montmartre cemetery but lives in one of the great plays of German literature, Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*.

At first thought this hypothesis may seem absurd, and there is indeed no direct evidence to support it. Only this much can be stated with certainty: the rise and fall of Marie Duplessis does not account entirely for the lachrymose story of Marguerite Gautier. Marguerite's physical appearance, her seductive charm, her consumptive cough are Marie's; but neither her character nor the plot of the play corresponds to the historical facts. In his "A propos de la Dame aux Camélias," Dumas admits: "Marie Duplessis n'a pas eu toutes les aventures pathétiques que je prête à Marguerite Gautier. Elle n'a pu jouer à son grand regret, que le premier et le deuxième acte de la pièce." There is no indication that the remaining three acts owe anything to a play so different in tone, intention, and literary value as Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*.

The only reference in Dumas' play to anything German is Gustave's remark: "Nous avons l'air d'un roman allemand ou d'une idylle de Goethe, avec de la musique de Schubert" (III, 3), from which it would be hard to infer any serious familiarity with German literature on the part of the playwright. Yet, granted the author's ignorance, there is still a possibility that he became acquainted with the action of Schiller's play in French form, and at a time so propitious as to suggest strongly an influence upon *La Dame aux Camélias*.

Early in 1847 Dumas *père* and *fils* returned from an extended jour-

ney through Spain. Shortly after their arrival in Marseilles, the younger Dumas learned of the premature death of Marie Duplessis, his former mistress. He decided that a fictionalized story of Marie Duplessis would provide a good way to break into print and to pay homage, at the same time, to a not yet forgotten stormy love affair. He must have started work almost immediately, for in 1848 the novel, *La Dame aux Camélias*, was published.

On June 11, 1847 the Théâtre-Historique, owned and managed by Dumas *père*, opened its new season with a performance of the elder Dumas' *Intrigue et Amour*, a translation of Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*, executed with the highhandedness and dash characteristic of the author of *Le Comte de Monte Cristo*. *Père* and *fils*, always on good terms, were particularly close during this period. It is probable that the father was working on the translation of Schiller's play while traveling in Spain, and it is equally probable that the son became familiar with its plot.

In setting out on his own first literary venture, the younger Dumas may have found his father's translation of *Kabale und Liebe* quite fruitful. The basic situation, commonplace as it may be, could be taken with little change from Schiller's play: the passionate love of two young people, doomed to shipwreck on the rock of social conventions uncompromisingly upheld by the young man's father. To be sure, Luise Miller and Marguerite Gautier belong to two different moral and historical worlds; yet it is easily conceivable that Luise's offer of renunciation gave young Dumas the idea for Marguerite's noble gesture. In the corresponding passage of his father's overdrawn translation, twice the length of the original text, young Dumas could read the following:

> Laisse-moi tout entier le mérite de mon dévouement, garde à ma douleur cette consolation de mon héroïsme; permets à ma conscience de se dire que j'ai rendu un fils à son père! C'est moi la véritable coupable . . . Ferdinand, résignons-nous, mon bien-aimé! Fuis-moi! Oh! comprends donc! je ne suis qu'un accident au milieu de ta vie, une pauvre fille que tu as rencontrée, par hasard, en te détournant de ton chemin. Reprends ce chemin que Dieu t'avait tracé et que tu eusses dû suivre toujours. Au bout de ce chemin tu trouveras un cœur noble, aimant, digne de toi. Beauté, richesse, naissance . . . qui te feront oublier la pauvre pâquerette perdue sous la mousse près de laquelle tu ne comprendras pas un jour que tu aies pu t'arrêter un seul instant [III, 4].

The entire plot, those three acts which Marie Duplessis had failed to live through, are here preshaped. There is only a small step from Luise's maudlin vision of the future to Marguerite's sentimental farewell to the world in which she bequeaths Armand to an anticipated "belle jeune fille que tu épouses" (V, 8). In addition to the overall plot which *Kabale und Liebe* may have furnished, the tricks by which the intrigue is set in motion are strikingly similar. A letter written

under pressure causes the lover to believe in the unworthiness of the loving and beloved girl. What Luise does under the threat of Wurm (III, 6), Marguerite does under the impulsion of her aroused conscience (III, 6). In both cases the purpose is the same—to tear the lover away from an undesirable engagement. In both cases the hero is made susceptible to the fabricated accusations by his jealousy, which, however, fails to account satisfactorily for his extraordinary credulousness both in Schiller and in Dumas. There is a family resemblance between the two young men so cruelly and easily cheated of their happiness.

The deceit leads to the same results in both plays. The duped lover vents his rage on the woman who has so cruelly hurt him (*KL*,V, 2 and 7; *DC*, IV, 7), and subjects her to a brutal inquisition in order to force from her the admission that the shattering letter did not convey her real feelings. Marguerite's desperate affirmation, "pars, oublie-moi, il le faut, je l'ai juré," echoes Luise's self-condemnation: "Par l'inexorable vérité, Ferdinand, j'ai écrit cette lettre . . . Vous avez mon aveu, je me suis condamnée moi-même. Oh partez maintenant, partez." In both plays the rivals who have been used as decoys in the destructive scheme, Maréchal de Kalb and M. de Varvilles, respectively, will meet the heartbroken heroes at pistol point (*KL*, IV, 3; *DC*, IV, 7). The duels, of course, fail to resolve the tragic misunderstanding. The heroine must perish, and only with her last breath will she be allowed to assure the hero once more of her undying love. In both cases, her death amounts to a half-conscious suicide—Marguerite returning to her exhausting way of life, Luise snatching from Ferdinand the poisoned drink with which he wanted to end his own misery in the version of Dumas *père*, which here takes the utmost liberty with Schiller's text.

More important than the elements of plot and action which *Kabale und Liebe* could supply, the very character of the heroine is already in the German play. The courtesan with the heart of gold is hardly a faithful portrait of Marie Duplessis. To be sure, the *fille de joie* capable of true love and noble feelings is a familiar enough figure in French literature from *Manon Lescaut* to *Marion Delorme*; yet none of these courtesans are closer relatives of Marguerite Gautier than Lady Milford in *Kabale und Liebe*. There is little of Lady Milford's grandiloquent majesty and intellectual superiority in Marguerite Gautier. But the human pattern is the same—the woman who, facing hardship and the prospect of a dire future, is supported by the wealthy or powerful men whom she despises; yet is never quite able to drown out the whisper of her conscience; and who, after meeting the man she can really love, is willing to sacrifice wealth and power in order to attain happiness and to regain some human decency. Apart from the references to prince and principality, could not Marguerite speak in exactly

the same terms in which Lady Milford confides to her chambermaid?

N'as-tu pas deviné que toutes ces fantaisies capricieuses, que cette soif incessante de plaisirs, n'étaient rien autre chose que des moyens d'étouffer dans mon cœur le seul désir que je n'avoue jamais, parce qu'il le remplit sans cesse? . . . je jetterai aux pieds du prince son cœur et sa principauté, et je fuirai, avec Walter, jusqu'au fond des déserts les plus reculés, jusqu'aux dernières limites de ce monde [II, 1].

This flight from a degrading world, the Rousseauan idyl "aux dernières limites de ce monde" which the princely mistress of Schiller's play envisages as her supreme bliss and the means for her purification, become reality, a very precarious and transitory reality, in the withdrawal of Armand and Marguerite from Paris. Scattered throughout Dumas' play (II, 13; III, 3; III, 4) are echoes of Lady Milford's desperate pleadings with Ferdinand not to permit her to "se rejeter plus avant qu'elle n'avait fait encore dans les profondeurs du vice" (II, 4). Of course, these are more or less stock-in-trade responses of the fallen woman who, in the midst of dissipation, yearns for a dignified and untainted happiness. The same may be said of the extraordinary generosity in material matters, the goodheartedness and compassion, evident in both Marguerite and Lady Milford. Still, Schiller's courtesan certainly sharpened the image which Dumas was to project in his work. Although Marguerite is lacking in Lady Milford's resourcefulness, in her virile determination to impose her will upon the beloved and her entire surroundings, there is in both women, at least at the beginning of their planning for the future, a certain amount of unscrupulousness and recklessness. Lady Milford is willing to exploit the political intrigue and the prince's infatuation to further her own plans, and to feign at least consent to the plot that is being hatched by Minister von Walter. By the same token, Marguerite sees nothing objectionable in obtaining from a former admirer the considerable sum of money which will enable her to live comfortably with Armand.

The establishment of a generic relationship between the two plays is all the more interesting when we recall the vast changes that occurred in the mental climate of Europe between their dates of composition. Precisely because the two plays are so similar, the shift that has occurred in the underlying social and moral philosophies becomes conspicuous and significant.

Schiller's play is worthy of the man on whom the French bourgeoisie, victorious in the great Revolution, was to bestow the patent of an honorary citizen. It is the battle cry and marching order of a class determined to challenge and to fight the *ancien régime*, which brutally destroys the happiness of two innocent people destined for each other. The lines are drawn as sharply as possible—here the rotten court which taints all who traffic with it, there the honest world of the upright,

industrious bourgeois. The private human tragedy of the two lovers transcends itself at every point; it serves as an inexorable accusation of a political system which feeds upon the heartblood of its citizens. One of the most impressive features of the play's structure is that the violent, open accusation of the guilty rises, so to speak, from the corpses of the victims.

Seventy years pass. The bourgeoisie has won and secured its victory. There is no external enemy left to be fought. The aristocrats in Dumas' play are harmless playboys whose charm fights a losing battle with their insipid foolishness. The only function they can still fill is that of the exploited substitute; they have become substitute fathers, substitute lovers. The little power that is left to them they owe to money, which is actually the instrument and yardstick of power of the bourgeoisie. The financial transaction—loan and sale, mortgage and liquidation—has become the objective correlative of man's deeds and emotions. In *Kabale und Liebe* money and valuables point toward a distorted order of values; they are tainted and demoniacal, the fruit and tool of man's dehumanization. Lady Milford's jewels are the transformed lifeblood of the Duke's subjects, and the purse filled with ducats which Ferdinand offers old Miller represents the shabby indemnity for the death of Luise. Wherever money and money's worth hold sway, human dignity and human rights have been viciously violated. In *La Dame aux Camélias*, on the other hand, man has settled comfortably into a money-oriented society, he buys and sells, he borrows and lends, from the first act to the last. As the focus of power, there stands behind *Kabale und Liebe* the morally degenerate castle, behind *La Dame aux Camélias* the morally neutral stock exchange.

In the world of Dumas, the very respectability which the bourgeois has attained represents the wall which will crush the love of two young people. In Schiller's view the moral rectitude of the bourgeois was his main weapon. Just because he was pure and on the side of the angels, he was capable of love, man's loftiest gift and resource against the degrading power of intrigue, the weapon of the mighty. Love was his supreme and inalienable right, which a social order, unwilling to grant him his inalienable rights, had to fight with utter ruthlessness. His love itself was revolutionary. Seventy years later, it is the bourgeois who demands the abdication of man's most legitimate and vital urge—for the sake of the good reputation without which he would lose face and his highest values. Love must fall a victim to respectability. It is for this reason that the father who steps between the two lovers has changed his features so completely. Schiller's Minister von Walter is the unadulterated villain; his demand that the son renounce his happiness and the bent of his heart is clearly inhuman and indefensible, except from a thwarted political point of view. But old M. Duval is in his full rights when he persuades Marguerite to give up her lover. He

can afford to be the perfectly understanding, fair-minded gentleman that he is, because his argument is irresistible; the desire of the heart has to be stifled so that a righteous and unquestioned social system may be upheld. Who could possibly revolt against so sensible a demand, except one who is blinded by a misguided passion? Love's freedom has turned into "free love" which, just because it is so irresponsibly free, must give way to the austere responsibilities to which the burgeoisie fell heir in its conquest of power. All that is left to us are tears that the heartbreaking separation is necessary; but necessary it certainly is.

Characteristically, the protagonists of Schiller's play must be swept from the stage by violence; murder and suicide are marshalled to bring about the solution. These "unnatural" deaths are a clear indication that the natural order of things has been crassly mutilated. In *La Dame aux Camélias*, nature obligingly cooperates with the established social system. No unnatural death is needed here; nature, with the help of an overgrowth of tuberculosis bacilli, sees to it that the disturbing element is eliminated. Love, as here presented, is a wayward upsetting experience that has to be outgrown. Schiller defiantly proclaimed the rights of love, because it was so genuine and beautiful that it must be victorious. Dumas bewails the helplessness of a love which has no possible claim to victory and exhausts itself in being merely beautiful.

A double standard has been evolved which to Schiller would have been unthinkable. The private and public spheres of man's life have fallen apart. Just because love is unacceptable, it gains the bitter sweetness of a beautiful thing which is doomed, rightly doomed, to failure. It is, almost by definition, only temporary; but its very frailty, its secretness, give it an irresistible appeal. Beauty is lavished upon the forbidden and outcast (Marguerite with her charm and her cough is but a symbol of this fascinating and sickly world), as a compensation, so to speak, for social unacceptability.

The soundness and health of bourgeois existence have to be strictly maintained, but there is a great deal of bad conscience underneath this strictness. Beauty, lightness of heart, joy, and spontaneity have fled from this respectable world and have found refuge in a "half-world" which, no matter how despised and slandered, offers an outlet for the unfulfilled desires of the heart. The social morality of the bourgeoisie and human morality in general, for Schiller identical and inseparable, have parted company. The human heart goes begging in the clean but cold air of the accepted social world. A heavy price is extracted for the flawless impressiveness of the social structure—happiness and love have gone underground. Safe in his position, but impoverished in his heart, the bourgeois has become a melancholy skeptic.

There is in this world no longer room for a full existence, and for this reason substance and appearance fall apart. The bad girls and some of the bad boys are not so bad, after all; in fact, Marguerite out-

shines in her noble resignation all the decency and propriety with which the bourgeois has decked himself out. However, Marguerite's nobility consists precisely in the fact that she is willing to sacrifice herself to the concepts and ideas of the very class which has marked her as an outcast. By her readiness to become a victim she tacitly testifies to the superiority of those values which victimize her. Hers is a life and a character in which essence and appearance have been rent apart.

But the same is true of the opposite camp. M. Duval, the champion of respectability and decency, is easily persuaded that the fallen woman is the truly noble one whom he can fully respect as a "human being," although he cannot possibly permit her to be even remotely connected with his family. A somewhat tenuous compromise has been concluded between two camps that actually exclude each other. The bourgeois admits that the noble heart beats on the opposite side, but the noble heart realizes full well that it has no place in the world of society.

Since one can no longer take oneself and one's moral and social foundations quite seriously, since the mental reservation about one's own existence is always present, it can happen that the feigned and pretended take moral precedence over the true and real. It is characteristic that in Dumas' play the gesture by which the heroine achieves her greatest human stature is a lie, a concealment of the true emotions of her heart. Her greatness consists in the very fact that she is capable of playing a role which is utterly at variance with her innermost being.

The great moment of Schiller's *cocotte* comes when, after a long life of pretense and untruthfulness, she finally throws off her mask and frees herself from her sham existence. With Schiller the revolutionary idealist, the awe-inspiring deed is a deed of liberation, of transcending in a heroic effort one's own petty existence, and making one's essential goodness and truth manifest in and against a hostile world. With Dumas, the tolerant and melancholy skeptic, the great deed is a deed of noble deceit, of accepting the onus of a sinful life, of playing, brave and resigned, the game of the world, with no other satisfaction than one's own consciousness of having done something good, which is good for the very reason that it will remain secret and utterly private.

With Dumas' *Dame aux Camélias* the proud genre of *bürgerliches Trauerspiel* has run its course. What started as a clarion call against an inhuman social order which had to be overthrown now ends on the melancholy note of a resigned "such is life"—sad indeed, but "realistically" to be endured with a smile on one's lips while the heart is breaking. The tears which in Schiller were intended to wash away social ignominy and shame are now allowed to flow away freely, private and inconsequential tears dedicated to a sweet but private and inconsequential love affair.

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LIMITS OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

VICTOR ERLICH

IN A provocative essay published recently in the *Sewanee Review,* Leslie A. Fiedler[1] takes strong exception to what he labels "a central dogma of much recent criticism." The "dogma" is antibiographism, which asserts that "biographical information is irrelevant to the understanding and evaluation of poems and that, conversely, poems cannot be legitimately used as material for biography."[2]

According to Fiedler, this view is open to attack on various grounds: (1) it is obsolete, since it takes no account of the recent findings of depth psychology; (2) it is philosophically erroneous, since it hinges on too narrow a notion of the work of art. To top it all, the antibiographical position has ceased to be either "amusing" or novel. It may have been useful, concedes Mr. Fiedler, as a protest against the romantic's excessive concern with the personal or against the "scientific" scholar's hunt for biographical minutiae. But "for a long time now it has been threatening to turn into one of these annoying clichés of the intellectually middle-aged, proffered with an air of a stimulating heresy."[3]

Apart from its loaded phraseology, this latter observation is a shrewd reminder that some of our critical emphases are suffering from a time lag. One can readily agree with Mr. Fiedler that nowadays the debunking of the genetic fallacy is not necessarily a sign of intellectual boldness. Times do change. The "New Criticism" is not so new any more. Yesterday's heresy has well-nigh become today's orthodoxy, as some of its most vocal spokesmen have moved into commanding positions in American literary scholarship. Thus, inveighing against biographism may indeed seem to be a case of flogging a dead horse.

But one wonders at times whether the horse is not merely playing dead. Not too long ago Harold Cherniss called attention to the fact that the recently discovered record of sale of a house belonging to John Milton had been hailed by many English scholars as an important addition to Milton research.[4] This is perhaps, too, a matter of a slight time lag. Some unreconstructed literary antiquarians have not yet caught up with the more advanced practitioners and theorists of lit-

[1] Leslie Fiedler, "Archetype and Signature," *Sewance Review,* LX (1952), 253-273.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 253.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Harold Cherniss, "The Biographical Fashion in Literary Criticism," *University of California Publications in Classical Philology,* XII, 279-292.

erary criticism who, with T. S. Eliot, have been increasingly training their sights on poetry rather than on the poet.

Granted, then, that antibiographism is not the "stimulating heresy" it was thirty years ago. The more important question still remains to be answered: Is it a fallacy? Or, to put it in Fiedler's terms, is the insistence of the "intrinsic" critic on "staying inside the poem," his alleged determination to rule out any and all biographical evidence, as sterile as the traditional shuttling between "undigested biographical data and uninspired paraphrases of poems"?[5]

At this point I wish to enter a demurrer. For one thing, I cannot go along with this grim equation. It seems to me that no procedure of modern criticism, however pedantic or inadequate, could be quite so fruitless as the old-fashioned erudite chitchat about the poet's "friends and relations." Fiedler's "doctrinaire anti-biographist" can be overly rigid; but he can never be as irrelevant as his antipode. Where the former speaks *about* the poem, or some aspect of it, the latter persisted in talking *around* the poem. Indeed, he often strained all the resources of his erudition and ingenuity in order to get away as far as possible from the literary work before him.

But, one can legitimately rejoin, while rigidity may not be so grave an offense as irrelevance, it is certainly a major handicap in dealing with a medium as flexible and sensitive as imaginative literature. So it is, to be sure. To disregard, for the sake of methodological purity, "extrinsic" evidence which could actually help illuminate the work means to inhibit critical analysis, to narrow down arbitrarily the range of literary scholarship. Depending on the type of literary creation involved and on the type of biographical knowledge available, the data on the poet's life may or may not be relevant to the examination of poetry. No amount of information of John Milton's property will help elucidate a single line in *Paradise Lost*. On the other hand, it would be spurious to deny the causal nexus between Dostoevsky's attitude toward his father and the theme of parricide in *The Brothers Karamazov*, or between D. H. Lawrence's apparently unresolved Oedipus complex and, say, *Sons and Lovers*.

However, I cannot think of any reputable exponent of "intrinsic" criticism who would quarrel with this obvious truth. While reading Mr. Fiedler's spirited essay, I could not help feeling at times that he was rather unfairly blaming an entire school of thought for the excesses of some overzealous disciples.

It would be presumptuous of me to try to vindicate here the actual practice of New Criticism. I do not know enough about the Anglo-American study of literature to undertake this strenuous task. I would like instead to focus on a comparable trend in Slavic literary scholar-

[5] *Sewanee Review*, LX, 258.

ship—the so-called Formalist movement. Perhaps a brief examination of the Slavic Formalist views on the question raised by Mr. Fiedler—that of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*—may shed some light on the strength and weakness of the "intrinsicist" position as well as on the limitations of the biographical approach.

At the beginning of this century the Russian study of literature was caught between two extremes. While in free-lance criticism impressionistic "appreciation" reigned supreme, academic scholarship bogged down in petty factualism, in the hoarding of disjointed bits of knowledge about the external circumstances under which literature is produced. Biographism, which paid more attention to the minute details of the poet's life than to the work of poetry and its components, offered many a literary historian a convenient escape from the broader problem of literature and society, as well as from the exacting task of aesthetic analysis.

The investigation of the literary masters oscillated between the anecdotal and the hagiographic. A host of serious and hard-working researchers tirelessly ransacked the archives for the relics of Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin. No scrap of documentary evidence, however remotely related to Pushkin or to his family and friends, was deemed unworthy of the closest scrutiny.

Pushkin's private life was dutifully explored in well-documented studies. Respectable academicians busily recorded the poet's innumerable love affairs, drawing up "Pushkin's Don Juan list." Less stimulating subjects such as "the care of Pushkin's children and property" or the vital question, "Did Pushkin smoke?"—also received their share of attention.

The reaction against these practices was vehement and inevitably lopsided. Around 1920 the rising "Formalist" movement, spearheaded by unorthodox philologists and students of literature, e.g., R. Jakobson, V. Shklovsky, B. Eichenbaum, charged with gusto into the "naive realistic formula that poetry lays bare the poet's soul."[6] Literature was declared to be a suprapersonal if not impersonal phenomenon, a product of deliberate application of techniques to verbal materials rather than of spontaneous self-expression, a convention rather than a confession. In an early essay R. Jakobson did not hesitate to maintain that to "attribute to the poet ideas and feelings embodied in his poems is just as absurd as the behavior of the mediaeval public which would beat up the actor who played Judas."[7]

This was a deliberately extravagant assertion aiming to "shock the Philistines" rather than to clarify a problem. Eventually, however, strident manifestoes gave way to serious critical studies. Initial claims

[6] Boris Tomashevsky, *Pushkin* (Moscow, 1925), p. 57.
[7] Roman Jakobson, *Noveishaya russkaya poeziya* (Prague, 1921), p. 15.

were toned down. Basic tenets were restated in more sober and judicious terms. This maturer version of Formalist theorizing came to be known as Prague Structuralism. In the late 1920s the center of the movement shifted toward Czechoslovakia, since in Russia, the cradle of Slavic Formalism, the critical debate had been rudely called to a halt. Where a militant Formalist would insist that poetry does not bear any causal relation to "life," "temperament," or psychology,[8] the Structuralist critic would qualify this proposition by adding the adjective "direct" to the words "causal relation." Rather than deny the bond between the poem and experience, he would emphasize the oblique, tenuous character of this connection.

A succinct statement of this latter position is found in Jakobson's essay, "What Is Poetry?"[9] written in 1933. Every mode of discourse, argued Jakobson, stylizes and modifies in a certain degree the event described. This stylization may hinge on the effect intended, on the audience, on preventive censorship, or on the repertory of the available formulae. Under the impact of such factors an actual experience depicted in a poem may virtually turn into its opposite.

Jakobson's test case here is the work of the Czech romantic poet, Karel Hynek Mácha. This intensely personal, almost confessional poetry appears to the critic as a bewildering interplay between fact and fiction. Jakobson calls attention to the stark contrast between the devotional reverence of Mácha's love poem and the cynically coarse references to its heroine in the poet's diary.[10]

A similar discrepancy was noted with regard to Pushkin. His famous poem, "I Remember a Wonderful Moment," one of the most remarkable examples of the idealizing lyrical style in the Russian language, was a reverent homage to beautiful Mrs. K. And yet, in a letter to a friend, Pushkin did not hesitate to speak of that "genius of pure beauty" in terms nearly obscene. "Which version of the experience," inquires Jakobson,[11] "is truthful?" The answer is: "Both and neither." Both contain a kernel of truth; neither tells the whole story.

In the actual attitude of Mácha, as with Pushkin, one may assume a fundamental ambivalence—a tension between idealization and "realistic" debunking. The crucial point is, however, that in each case the conflict is resolved in consonance with the exigencies of the genre, of the medium employed. The formulae of love poetry encouraged, indeed urged upon the poet, the tone of adoration, of worship. (By the same token, one may add *re* Pushkin, the hard-boiled style of an intimate letter to a male confidant favored nonchalance and urbane cynicism in relating a love affair.)

[8] Boris Eichenbaum, *Skvoz literaturu* (Leningrad, 1942), pp. 256-257).
[9] Roman Jakobson, "Co je poesie?", *Volné Směry*, XXX (1933-34).
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*

If the fact of life, filtered through the prism of poetic convention, can sometimes be deformed beyond recognition, conversely it is the conventional nature of poetry which makes it possible for the poem to come dangerously close to the actual, when we least expect it. We should not believe a poet, warned Jakobson, when he assures us that this time he will give us not fiction but unadulterated truth; nor should we take him more literally when he insists that his tale is pure invention. Whatever our assumptions about literature may be, we do not really expect the poet *qua* poet to tell "nothing but the truth." As Eichenbaum put it, "in poetry the author's face is covered with a mask."[12] Consequently, "censorship," which in actual confessions provides a brake on candor, may be considerably relaxed in literature. Thus, to return to Jakobson's essay, another Czechoslovak lyrical poet, Janko Král, could in his verse be more candid about the passionate love he felt for his mother, apparently the real leitmotif of his life, than he would have been in a nonpoetic statement. He had a right to assume that this exhibitionistic display of the Oedipal attachment would be mistaken by the reader for a mere "mask," a pretense of infantilism.[13]

But the complexity of the problem, argued the Formalists, does not end here. The relationship between poetic fiction and psychic reality is not a one-way causal dependence. Poetry mythologizes the poet's life in accordance with the conventions prevalent at the time, with the idealized image of the Poet typical of the given literary school. An "autobiographical" poem relates often not what has occurred but what should have occurred. Thus, out of a discordant welter of fact and of indispensable accessories there emerges a literary biography-myth. But this myth may become a fact of life in its own right. Literary mystification may be projected back into actuality, the "mask" may obtrude upon the "man," as an ideal to be lived up to, as a pattern of behavior to be emulated. Byronism as a way of life is, obviously, a good case in point.

More recent examples come to mind; one of them is the Russian Symbolist movement. Russian Symbolism was never content to be "merely" a school of poetry; it aspired to be a philosophy of life, a method of recreating one's inner self in accordance with a heroic myth of the Artist. A frantic attempt to project art into reality inhibited spontaneity, where life was treated as a potential theme for future poems, or raised the poet's emotions to the feverish pitch of the Dionysian ritual. To the single-minded aesthete, V. Bryusov, the most intimate experience was a "means for brightly singing verses."[14]

[12] Boris Eichenbaum, *Anna Akhmatova* (Petrograd, 1923), p. 132.

[13] Roman Jakobson, "Čo je poesie?"

[14] Valeri Bruysov, "Poetu" (1907), quoted from V. Bruysov, *Izbrannye sochineniya* (Moscow, 1945), p. 173.

In Blok or Bely a poem was often not so much a record of an actual emotion as a lyrical scenario to be acted out in real life.

Clearly, insisted the Slavic "new critics," there is no point-to-point correspondence between imaginative literature and personality. The literary work, Manfred Kridl maintained, transcends individual psychology. In the process of objectification the artifact becomes separated from its creator, acquires life of its own.[15] Roman Ingarden claimed that the psychic experience which gives rise to the work of art ceases to exist *qua* experience the moment this work comes into being.[16]

Where most of the Russian Formalists invoked the impact of suprapersonal techniques on the inchoate individual experience, the Czech aesthetician Jan Mukařovský stated the problem in his favorite terms —those of semiotics. "Like language, art is a system of signs, invested with inter-subjective meaning."[17] Because of its semiotic value, the work of art does not correspond completely either to the frame of mind from which it sprang or to that which it induces. Whatever alleged expression of the author's experience we find in a work of art is primarily an element of meaning integrated into an artistic structure. Sometimes the creator anticipates life, sometimes we have to do with pure invention—a situation utilized artistically, but never actually experienced. "The poetic I," observed Mukařovský in another passage, "is not identical with any empirical personality, not even with that of the author. It is the pivotal point in the composition of the poem."[18]

Boris Tomashevsky, an eminently sane literary historian, summed this up in less abstruse terms: "lyrical poetry is not worthless material for biographical investigation. It is simply unreliable material."[19] Lyrical testimony is not evidence *per se*; it becomes evidence only when it is corroborated by other, auxiliary testimonies.

What is the methodological moral to be derived from these theses? It is primarily a wholesome warning against literal readings of poetry. It is a reminder that what may seem on the surface to be a reflection of psychic reality may at closer range turn out to be an aesthetic formula superimposed on this reality; that whatever experience—communal or personal—finds expression in poetry is always formed or deformed in line with the exigencies of the given poetic genre.

To revert to our starting point, all this could hardly be news for a sophisticated opponent of antibiographism, such as Mr. Fiedler. His

[15] Manfred Kridl, *Wstęp do badań nad dziełem literackiem* (Wilno, 1936), p. 102.

[16] Roman Ingarden, *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (Halle, 1931).

[17] Jan Mukařovský, *Kapitoly z české poetiky* (Prague, 1941), I, 19.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[19] Boris Tomashevsky, *Puskin* (Moscow, 1925), p. 69.

brilliant discussion of the "Archetype of the Poet"[20] is ample proof that he is well aware of the problem of stylization in poetry. Yet he is apparently too sanguine about the applicability of psychological concepts to literary analysis to appreciate fully the limitations of any biographical inquiry.

It would be futile to deny that the literary scholar has a great deal to learn from depth psychology, even if most of the actual attempts to apply the Freudian method to literature have been rather disappointing. Indeed, it is only in the light of a coherent psychological hypothesis that the old-fashioned scholar's "undigested biographical data" can acquire any real meaning and value. But, as Freud himself clearly implied, individual psychology cannot as yet elucidate the nature of creative genius, or bridge the ontological gap between "Dichtung" and "Wahrheit." Mr. Fiedler seems to overlook this gap when he says briskly: "As soon as two works by a single author are considered side by side, one has begun to deal with biography, that is, with interconnectedness, fully explicable only in terms of personality, inferred or discovered."[21]

One wonders what is meant here by "personality." Is this the so-called creative personality—the poet *qua* poet—or the psychophysical person—the man behind the work? It seems to me that, in his eagerness to relate poetry to the poet, Fiedler tends to confuse the former with the latter and thus telescopes two different levels of analysis.

This impression is enhanced by the fact that, in arguing for the indispensability of a biographical approach, Fiedler uses Shakespeare as one of his test cases. Shakespeare happens to be an author of whose life we still have little definite knowledge. Usually, therefore, when we are referring to a set of characteristics as "Shakespearian," we are not speaking of the attitudes, the behavior pattern, in short, of the actual character structure of the man who wrote *Hamlet*; we are pointing to qualities of style, of tone or composition, if you will, of world view—but only in terms of a *poetic* vision of life embodied in the *work*. In other words, we are dealing here with an element of literary structure rather than with an "underlying factor." Indeed, the very fact that we can talk "Shakespeare" without *meaning* to refer to the man is proof that the individuality of a literary artifact and the empirical person behind it are two different things.

In their *Theory of Literature* Wellek and Warren point out correctly that one can speak of a literary work as "personal" only in a figurative sense.[22] Likewise, the term "creative personality" may be legitimately considered a metaphor *sui generis*, a personification, as it

[20] *Sewanee Review*, LX, 260.

[21] *Loc. cit.*

[22] René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York, 1949), p. 73.

were, of artistic unity, discovered in the work of an individual writer. When this ambiguous concept is not used to denote the creator's psyche, inferred or "intuited" from the creation—a dangerous procedure and a dubious usage!—it can be said to dramatize the "physiognomical similarity" (Wellek) [23] between various writings of the same author.

To be sure, this figure of speech is neither arbitrary nor fortuitous. The "personality" reconstructed from the work and the real person who gave rise to it are always somehow interconnected. The precise nature of this relationship and its susceptibility to systematic inquiry vary from author to author and from genre to genre. Where no relevant biographical evidence is available, the connection is virtually impossible to establish. Where the world the poet creates is the reverse of the life he lives, the relationship appears to be largely negative or, as a psychologist would say, compensatory. Where the drives or conflicts which ostensibly dominate the poet's life find unmistakable expression in his use of language and his choice of themes, it is close and organic. But in all these cases the idiosyncratic, the merely personal, is mediated through style, that is, through the totality of devices which the poet employs in creating his mode of illusion and which he selects from the store of artistic traditions available to him.

Does this mean that in order to avoid difficulties we ought to give up the attempt to "connect" poetry and the actual? Not at all. It means rather than we shall have a better chance of succeeding in this arduous task, if we see life and work as interrelated but qualitatively distinct levels of reality. And since the poem is always a deflection, not a reflection, of experience, we cannot hope to assess properly the nature of the latter without gauging first the deforming impact of the aesthetic formula, the angle of deflection.

"In our writings," said Jakobson[24] in 1933, "we postulated the autonomy rather than the separateness of art." Autonomy rather than separateness—this is the crux of the matter. It is true that the Slavic Formalists, and apparently some of their Occidental counterparts, sounded at times as if they *were* affirming the separateness of poetry. To that extent they impoverished the study of literature and laid themselves open to the charge of psychological aridity. But the core of their message has been autonomy—a notion which implies both the uniqueness of imaginative literature and its relatedness to other modes of human endeavor. This notion will remain a lasting contribution of modern criticism.

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[23] *Ibid.*

[24] "Co je poesie."

PLATO AND SIDNEY'S *DEFENCE OF POESIE*

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STUDENTS of the literary criticism of the Renaissance have long disagreed among themselves about the precise balance of ideas derived from various sources in Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*. The current view most widely held would seem to be that expressed by Atkins in his recent study of Renaissance English criticism. Atkins points out that, while Sidney's "main doctrine . . . is coloured throughout by Platonic teaching," that same doctrine, namely "that poetry is essentially an art of 'imitation,'" accords with Aristotelian theory; and Sidney's conception of the purpose of poetry—"to teach and delight"—is derived ultimately from Horace.[1] Atkins says, more conclusively, that in the central section of the *Defence* Sidney fused together "ideas drawn from various quarters, from Plato and Aristotle chiefly, but from Horace, Cicero, and Plutarch, from patristic writings, from Italian and other sources as well."[2]

In stressing the eclecticism of the *Defence*, Atkins gives a much more helpful description of its genetic relationships than that which we inherited from the elder historians of criticism. Saintsbury, Spingarn, Smith, and Cook all tended to think of Sidney's essay as a work based almost wholly upon notions derived from Aristotle, or the Renaissance Italian Aristotelians, or both, and saw the *Defence* as a critical document of importance only because it first bore Aristolelian theory into English criticism.[3]

More than a decade ago, Irene Samuel attempted to refute this interpretation of the *Defence of Poesie* in an article in which she called attention to the Platonic elements of Sidney's essay.[4] She argued that Sidney's underlying purpose had been to reconcile Plato the accuser with poetry the accused; and she sought to prove that "Plato's word is the main source of Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*," basing her case upon the conviction that Sidney was well read in Plato, upon many parallels between the thought of the defender and the thought of the

[1] J. W. H. Atkins, *English Literary Criticism: The Renascence* (London, 1947), pp. 113, 116.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 125; cf. C. S. Baldwin, *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (New York, 1939), pp. 178 ff.

[3] George Saintsbury, *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe* (Edinburgh and London, 1900-04), II, 176; J. E. Spingarn, *History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (New York, 1899), p. 269; G. G. Smith, ed., *Elizabethan Critical Essays* (Oxford, 1904), I, lxxiv; A. S. Cook, ed., *Sidney's Defense of Poesy* (Boston, 1890), p. xxxvi; and M. T. Herrick, *The Poetics of Aristotle in England* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 26 ff.

[4] "The Influence of Plato on Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*," *MLQ*, I (1940), 383-391.

accuser, and also, in part, upon her belief that Plato was not wholly serious about his condemnation of poets in the tenth book of the *Republic*. She concluded that "Sidney has tried the poet by the standard which Plato set; and has found him . . . most able to perform the Platonic function of leading men to that virtue and happiness which a knowledge of truth bestows."

But Miss Samuel's argument suffered from the same one-sidedness which afflicted the doctrine of the elder historians of criticism. She overstated her case as much as they had theirs—and perhaps this sort of overstatement is the inevitable consequence of any attempt to amend a received opinion. Miss Samuel gave a more circumspect exposition of Plato's attitude towards poetry than anyone else had given before, although her suggestion that Plato was not altogether serious when he banished poets from his ideal commonwealth reveals a basic misunderstanding of Plato. If she had not, moreover, presented her study as the solution of a problem of influence, her statement of the case would not be open to the criticism that she ignored possible intermediary sources. These were numerous. Platonism is an exasperating subject to work with in the study of Renaissance literature because Plato's influence was, from the first, so organic in Western culture, and was transmitted in such a multitude of ways, that one can never be sure whether he has to deal with Plato, or with some later transformation of Platonism, or with several strata of transformed Platonisms. We must be aware, therefore, when we speak of Platonism in Renaissance literature, that what we really mean is a complex of more or less Platonic elements drawn, now from Plato directly, now from contemporary recensions of Plato's works, now from the whole accumulation of Platonic concepts and beliefs sometimes concealed and unrecognized in the Western Christian tradition. Miss Samuel did not concern herself with the possibility that Sidney's Platonism may really be the Platonism of Ficino, Pico, Poliziano, or Daniello. Nor should one demand more than that kind of admission. It is perhaps impossible at this date to say that a particular Platonic element in a Renaissance work comes from Pico rather than Plato, that another comes from Daniello, and so on. And, even if one could be that specific, the consequence of such particularity would be a better understanding of the ways in which Platonism was *transmitted*, not a better understanding of Sidney's *Defence* or of its Platonic content. Finally, a more serious fault in Miss Samuel's approach to a study of Sidney's debt to Plato was her failure to take sufficiently into account the relevance of Plato's discussion of myth to the question of his theory of poetry. It is about this aspect of the subject that I wish to say more in the present article.

Those who have discussed Sidney's *Defence of Poesie* since the publi-

cation of Miss Samuel's study have usually either ignored her argument or have tacitly rejected it. Even Atkins, who stresses Sidney's eclecticism and deals at some length with the Platonic content of the essay, leaves his reader ultimately with the impression that it is the Aristotelian side of the essay which is dominant and most important. And others have been even more loyal to the old law. Gilbert Highet, for example, names Sidney among writers influenced by Aristotle but says nothing of him when mentioning writers influenced by Plato.[5] These critics may have felt, as I do, that Miss Samuel overstated the case and oversimplified the phenomenon, especially in claiming that Plato was "the main source" of Sidney's theory of poetry. It is as much a mistake to see only the Platonic features as to see only the Aristotelian. There is much of both—so much and so intricately interwoven that it is really impossible, as well as untrue to the Renaissance passion for such fusion, to separate the one from the other. We are always likely to end in error when we seek the solution of such a problem equipped with the assumption that we can proceed as if the thought of Aristotle is irreconcilably opposed to that of Plato; and anyone who attempts to assert the presence of the thought of the one in such a work as the *Defence of Poesie* without acknowledging the thought of the other allows himself to be involved in that fallacious assumption.

I should say that Sidney's *Defence* relies principally upon Plato for its fundamental conceptions of the nature of poetry and poetry's ethical affects, but principally upon Aristotle for its treatment of the formal aspects of poetry and of the whole question of the relationship between form and function. Thus most of Sidney's larger ethical notions about poetry come from Platonic doctrine, but nearly all of his more specific notions about the genres, their differentiation, and their several purposes come from Aristotelian doctrine. This is to say that, while most of his *poetic* depends upon Aristotle, Sidney's *defense* of poetry depends upon Plato. It seems to me that any unprejudiced examination of the eclecticism of the *Defence* must arrive at this conclusion.

But, although some suggestion of this view may be assembled from previous studies of the *Defence*, I am not content to leave the question there because I am not altogether satisfied with Miss Samuel's representation of the Platonic content of the essay, for the reasons which I have already mentioned. Furthermore, I believe that, with the help of a classicist's more recent study of Plato's theory of poetry, one can now deal somewhat more precisely with the Platonism of Sidney's *Defence*. Believing this, and convinced that all students of literature share a concern for the place of Plato's thought in the works of later

[5] *The Classical Tradition* (Oxford and New York, 1949), p. 123. J. A. K. Thomson, *The Classical Background of English Literature* (London, 1948), pp. 173 f., 180 f., minimizes the influence of Platonism in the English Renaissance generally and says nothing of Sidney's debt to Platonism.

writers, I am willing to risk what might otherwise be thought a superfluous and repetitive study. I could not undertake to reconsider the Platonic content of Sidney's *Defence of Poesie* without the support of Ludwig Edelstein, whose article, "The Function of Myth in Plato's Philosophy," published four years ago, first led me to perceive that the last word had not yet been spoken about Sidney's Platonism.[6]

Edelstein begins his study of what is really Plato's theory of poetry by reminding us of the important place given to myths in Plato's works. He confronts frankly the apparent inconsistency between Plato's ideal of the reason-led philosopher and Plato's own mastery of a kind of myth which depends upon emotional as well as rational appeal. Edelstein is convinced that the question of the function of Plato's myths is inseparable from the problem of the relationship between reason and imagination, and that, in Plato's thought, this dual problem involves also the relation between philosophy and poetry. Hence, when we are looking for Plato's philosophy of poetry, we must study his own use of myths and his own comments about myths, as well as the more famous denunciation of poets in the *Republic*. When myth is spoken of or used in the dialogues, one must understand that what is said or done applies quite as much to poetry written by poets; for Plato wished poets, too, to write myth (that is, poetry) according to the principles laid down for the myths of the philosopher.

That Plato recognized some essential conflict between the poet and the philosopher and that he censured the inherited mythology, Edelstein admits; but he insists on what is now generally agreed though sometimes forgotten—that Plato had much to say (e.g., *Republic*, II, 379a ff.) about how poetry ought to be written and about its uses as a handmaid of ethics.

Because poetry is shaped by reason, it is not antithetical to reason. As a matter of fact, in more than one place in the dialogues, attention is called to the difficulty of maintaining a distinction between λόγος and μῦθος. In the *Gorgias* (523a), Socrates asserts emphatically that he regards what he is about to say as a piece of dialectic (λόγος), even though his hearers may mistake it for a fable (μῦθος). Again, in the *Meno* (18a-b), the theory of reminiscence is set forth in a myth introduced by the cautionary remark that what is said, while not literally true, must not be regarded either as a mere flight of fancy. And elsewhere Plato insists that myths are indispensable because of their power to persuade of truths, or even of mere probabilities which rational philosophy's primary instrument, dialectic, could only point to.[7] What

[6] *JHI*, X (1949), 463-481.

[7] *Theaetetus*, 152e; *Phaedrus*, 229b-230a; *Phaedo*, 114d; *Republic*, II, 377a; *Timaeus*, 29d; *Republic*, X, 614a. Cf. Aristotle's distinction between dialectic and rhetoric (*Rhetoric*, 1354a).

might be termed the "cosmological" myth is often needed for this purpose.[8]

In problems of ethics, on the other hand, the philosopher can more often attain to exact knowledge by means of reason. Yet the philosopher needs "ethical" myths no less than cosmological myths.[9] Though the ethical myth does not serve as a substitute for rational knowledge, it is an indispensable complement to rational knowledge in the pursuit of virtue and truth. The reason for this need is to be found in the psychology of man himself. The ethical myth is demanded by the irrational part of man's nature. It cannot be banished from philosophy because both parts of the human soul—reason and passion—must be ministered to by the philosopher. Ethical myths, then, are produced by reason but directed at both the reason and the passion of man; their function is to keep man hopeful and courageous in the continual *agon* which engages his soul while it struggles towards wisdom and virtue. Neither Plato nor his teacher ever forgot that man—even the special sort of man who loves wisdom—is a mixture of intellect and emotion. There is, said Socrates, a child within us all that is afraid to go into the dark, and it takes a great deal of singing to charm that child to sleep (*Phaedo*, 77d). He was speaking of the fear of death, but the remark is quite as applicable to the fear of life. It is for this reason that—although the reason may be readily and permanently convinced by a single rational argument—dialectic must be supplemented repeatedly by a suitable appeal to, and comforting of, that other part of the soul which is ruled by pleasure and pain; for we cannot have the one part of man without the other.

This psychological theory of Plato's is neither antirational nor antiphilosophic. The emotions are not cultivated in the ethical myth for their own sakes; they are, however, admitted to have an effect upon reason. Pleasure and pain can bewitch reason and destroy intellectual insight, can tyrannize over mind, unless they be controlled and subtly forced to subserve the intellect. It is often said that, in Plato's ethic, to know the good is to be good, that knowledge is equivalent to virtue. But Edelstein's interpretation has made me think that, in the Platonic view, we do not really *know* good, or anything else, until we have apprehended it with passion as well as with reason, that in Plato reason is only the conscious half of knowledge, that knowledge is half passion. Man can adhere persistently to what he knows, to the wisdom of philosophy, only if his fears be allayed and his hopes sustained by something which, by its very nature, appeals to and governs that part of the soul where fear and hope are bred. The irrational in us must be charmed

[8] In addition to the passage already cited in the *Meno*, the best examples are the myth of creation in the *Timaeus* and the political myth in the *Protagoras*.

[9] E.g., the fable of the soul's chariot (*Phaedrus*, 246).

by a suitable form of discourse in order to keep our rational faculties free. That, in Plato's view, is the purpose of poetry. Among men in general, poetry serves as myth serves for the philosopher.

In the light of this interpretation of Plato's theory of poetry, one cannot accept any suggestion that he was not really serious about his condemnation of poets in the *Republic*. It was because Plato had so clearly in mind the true nature and purpose of poetry that he lost patience with the poets of his own time and their lying about the gods. Any discussion of his theory of poetry must begin and end with that fact.

It is my belief that Edelstein's exposition of Plato's theory of poetry —by illuminating Plato's conception of the *use* of poetry—makes it possible to see more clearly the precise importance of Platonic ingredients in Sidney's *Defence* and therefore demands a reconsideration of the whole question. I am not at present concerned with whether Sidney derived these ingredients directly from a study of Plato or whether they came to him through one or more of the possible intermediary sources of Platonic doctrine, though I must confess I am tempted to assume that the place which Platonic notions occupy in the *Defence of Poesie* and the shape in which they appear there suggest that Sidney's Platonism may have been more a consequence of firsthand knowledge than we have sometimes supposed. I am concerned more with the particular use which Sidney made of these Platonic notions (from whatever quarter they came) in constructing his defense of poetry than with a problem of sources.

Sidney refers explicity to Plato several times. He confesses that he finds it difficult to answer the argument against poetry implied by the banishing of poets from the Republic because he respects the authority of the philosopher who banished them, him "whom I must confesse of all *Philosophers*, I have ever esteemed most worthie of reverence; and with good reason, since of all *Philosophers* hee is the most Poeticall."[10] Plato might be thought to have defiled "the fountaine out of which his flowing streames have proceeded," Sidney admits; but he insists that, instead of being content with that reflection, we should "boldly examine with what reasons hee did it." Sidney argues that Plato really condemned, not poetry itself, but only the abuse of poetry:

> *Plato* found fault that the *Poettes* of his time, filled the worlde with wrong opinions of the Gods, making light tales of that unspotted essence; and therefore wold not have the youth depraved with such opinions . . . The *Poets* did not induce such opinions, but did imitate those opinions alreadie induced.

Plato was only "banishing the abuse"; he is really "our Patron, and

[10] All quotations in this paragraph are taken from Albert Feuillerat, ed., *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney* (Cambridge, 1912-26), III, 33 f.

not our adversarie." Those who think otherwise, Sidney declares, "shew their mistaking of *Plato*, under whose Lyons skinne, they would make an Aslike braying against *Poesie*." Indeed, Sidney admits, Plato attributed even more to poetry than he is willing to do, thinking it "a verie inspiring of divine force, farre above mans wit."

This much Sidney says explicitly in answer to those who had cited Plato's expulsion of poets as evidence that the philosopher despised the poet's art. But even more of Sidney's understanding of the Platonic view of poetry is implied in that part of his forensic oration which constitutes the *defensio* proper. The center of his defense is the claim that poetry conduces to virtue better than any science or any other art. He approaches the argument which supports this thesis by giving a definition of learning or wisdom:

> This purifying of wit, this enriching of memorie, enabling of judgement, and enlarging of conceit, which commōly we call learning, under what name so ever it come forth, or to what immediate end so ever it be directed, the finall end is, to lead and draw us to as high a perfection, as our degenerate soules made worse by their clay-lodgings, can be capable of.[11]

It becomes apparent a few lines further along that Sidney has shaped this definition of learning to show that poetry corresponds as closely as possible to learning in general and is nearly synonymous with it; he says: "So that the ending end of all earthly learning, being vertuous action, those skils that most serve to bring forth that, have a most just title to be Princes over al the rest." It is the primacy of poetry over the other arts and over all sciences in the teaching of virtue which constitutes the foundation of his defense. The "finall end" of poetry, as of learning, is to "draw us to as high a perfection, as our degenerate soules . . . can be capable of." Ethical effect is the purpose which the poet must have in mind; that is the distinguishing characteristic of poetry: "It is that faining notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightfull teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by."

Sidney's use here of the phrase "delightfull teaching" has usually been regarded as merely a repetition of the common Renaissance interpretation of Horace's "aut prodesse . . . aut delectare"; but is it only that? In another place in the *Defence*, Sidney gives a rather formal definition of poetry: "*Poesie* therefore, is an Art of *Imitation*: for so *Aristotle* termeth it in the word μίμησις, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end to teach and delight." Now, there is no other passage in the whole of the *Defence of Poesie* which better exemplifies its eclecticism than this passage does. The place in the definition of

[11] This and all following quotations of Sidney's *Defence* are taken from Feuillerat, III, 9-14.

the term *imitation* suggests the important use which Sidney made of Aristotelian concepts. But the explanation which he gives of the meaning of the term reveals the influence of the Renaissance Italian commentators on the *Poetics*. And then the definition is rounded off with the familiar Renaissance interpretation of the Horatian "aut prodesse . . . aut delectare" and "ut pictura poesis." Here, it seems to me, the phrase "to teach and delight" is obviously just a repetition of the Renaissance misinterpretation of Horace. In the other passage, the phrase "delightfull teaching" seems to me to be more suggestive of Plato, especially of Plato's theory of myth. For the one puts equal emphasis upon the moral purpose and the pleasurableness of poetry, while the other makes the moral purpose primary, with the pleasure regarded as an instrument of that moral purpose.

Even Sidney's distinction between "well knowing onely" and "well doing" is harmonious with Plato's ethical doctrine—though this harmony can be perceived only if one gives due attention to the context in which the distinction occurs. In that context, Sidney is accusing those who follow mere sciences (that is, merely rational modes of knowing) of having neglected the distinction—which he expresses first in terms of the Greek concept of ἀρχίτεκτονικη—and therefore of failing to understand that rational knowledge must be *enabled* by that which best serves to bring forth virtuous action, namely poetry.

This leads Sidney into his well-known comparison of poetry with history and philosophy, where, again, one can descry a Platonic element which has often been overlooked. The philosopher, the historian, and the poet may all be thought of, Sidney explains, as seeking to "win the goale" of leading men to wisdom and virtue. But the philosopher has only what Shakespeare was to call "airy nothings," abstract, general precepts without concrete, particular example; and the historian, on the other hand, knows only a "local habitation and a name," only example without precept.

> Now doth the peerlesse Poet performe both, for whatsoever the *Philosopher* saith should be done, he gives a perfect picture of it by some one, by whō he presupposeth it was done, so as he coupleth the generall notion with the particular example. A perfect picture I say, for hee yeeldeth to the powers of the minde an image of that whereof the *Philosopher* bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pearce, nor possesse the sight of the soule so much as that other doth.

The philosopher, to be sure, gives us indispensable definitions and presents us with "many infallible grounds of wisdom," but these foundations of virtue "lie darke before the imaginative and judging power, if they bee not illuminated or figured forth by the speaking picture of *Poesie*." Despite the obvious eclecticism of this significant passage, and despite the undeniable differences which it suggests between Pla-

to's and Sidney's conceptions of human psychology, the statement sounds remarkably like a thoughtful exposition of Plato's theory of the ethical function of poetry. Sidney, in admitting that the poet must transmit to the whole mind the rational precepts of the philosopher, expresses in his own words the Platonic belief (reiterated later by Goethe and Coleridge) that the poet should receive the "veil of poetry from the hands of truth."

The emphasis throughout Sidney's *Defence* upon the greater efficacy of poetry in piercing and possessing the soul, in moving to virtuous action, in making virtue come to life, as it were—this emphasis is closer to Plato than to Aristotle or Horace. Sidney may, of course, have found this emphasis in intermediary sources of Platonism, but until that has been demonstrated beyond cavil we can only suppose that he found it where Edelstein found it, in the many scattered passages of the dialogues of Plato where myth is spoken of or employed. Even more central to Sidneys' theory of poetry than the Aristotelian concept of imitation or the Horatian notion of a speaking picture which pleases and teaches is the Platonic doctrine of the ethical myth which so charms the part of the soul where fear and hope are bred that it enables reason to prevail over man's acts, thus implementing and carrying over into action the wisdom of philosophy.

Plato's belief that poetry must be written in accordance with the dictates of truth, to sustain the soul in its struggle for wisdom and virtue, is, I think, the most significant idea which Sidney derived from Platonism; and it is this idea, above all, which Sidney, by giving it a central eminence in his *Defence*, transmitted to such English poets as Spenser and Milton. Spenser's desire "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" and the fulfillment of that intention attested by Milton's early devotion to the vatic purpose which governed his entire life and motivated all his poetry—these are both instances of the survival of the Platonic theory of poetry in the English Renaissance. If we continue to say that Sidney's essay is historically important because it introduced Aristotelian critical concepts into English poetry, we are stating less than half the matter. The Aristotelian elements are certainly there, and they are surely important. If they seem to be more obvious, it is only because they lie more on the surface and because Aristotle's theory of poetry, being for the most part explicitly stated in a single document, is more widely and more clearly known and recognized than Plato's. The remarkable thing about Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, as Atkins shows, is its unity and harmony of thought arrived at eclectically.[12] In spite of minor inconsistencies, Sidney fused the critical theories which he had encountered in diverse sources and forged them into a weapon so sound,

[12] Atkins, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

so satisfying to the Puritan conscience, that he really did defend poetry against Gossonism by leading English poets towards high moral aims during the age in which the Platonic ethic was one of the principal motivations of major poets.[13]

The Platonic theory of poetry might not have survived with such vitality in works which we would not willingly let die if Sidney had not read Plato, or Platonists, perceptively, had not transplanted Plato's thinking about poetry into English soil. Though we must be aware of a certain reluctance on Plato's part to admit the inadequacy of the naked *logos* addressed to reason alone, there is too much of the elder philosopher's admission in the younger advocate's positive assertions for us to be in doubt about the ultimate source—whatever the intermediary sources may have been—of much that is fundamental in the best defense of poetry yet written in our language. We can fully appreciate the philosophic foundations of Sidney's *Defence* only by reconsidering Plato's theory of myth. Such study would prevent us from overestimating the Aristotelian elements in Sidney's essay; it would prevent us from misinterpreting Sidney's sentiments as anti-philosophic; and it would enable us to see in Sidney's faith in the ethical power of poetry a positive and timeless survival of the vatic ideal rather than a sugar-coated pill prescribed as a specific antidote to the Philistinism of Stephen Gosson. Sidney's treatment of the relationship between philosophy and poetry suggests that he was an acute and sympathetic student of the thought of the philosopher who first inquired into the kinship between those two noblest works of the human mind.

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[13] It has not been to my purpose in this discussion to deal at all with the place in Sidney's *Defence* of the rhetorical tradition, which, of course, contributed to the support of any justification of literature on the ground that it moves to virtuous action, and which also yielded to Sidney the very form and method of his *Defence*.

RONSARD COMPARATIST STUDIES: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERSPECTIVES

ISIDORE SILVER

FROM THE point of view of comparative literature, Paul Laumonier's treatment of sources in his critical edition of Ronsard is surely one of its happiest achievements, and vindicates fully what he said of this phase of the work in the Introduction to the first volume in 1914:

> Mais ce qui domine dans notre commentaire, c'est l'indication des sources où l'auteur a puisé son inspiration, et des réminiscences qui ont excité sa verve ou nourri ses développements. Nous y attachons une grande importance, parce que leur connaissance permet seule de mesurer le degré de son originalité et d'en apprécier la valeur.[1]

And he might have added that in many cases, provided the hunt for sources is not permitted to become an end in itself, it is only the knowledge of the source that places us in complete possession of the meaning of a text and of its beauty.

To carry out his intention adequately in accordance with his announced ideal, Laumonier must have read almost the totality of what is best in Occidental literature. To this reading and to the great scholar's unsurpassed knowledge of Ronsard's works we owe the rich documentation of sources in the critical edition. These indications of source, which are, so to speak, the comparatist's topography, will, however, lie distributed among the notes of some eighteen volumes upon the completion of this edition.

Other scholars also have been active in this field, to be sure; a considerable amount of work has gone forward on Ronsard's literary associations, but in a rather desultory fashion. The result has been an astonishing unevenness in the growth of our knowledge of Ronsard's place in comparative literature. The present paper is an effort to survey the field as a whole, to point out where the areas of most fruitful labor might be expected to lie, to see how in actuality these areas have been cultivated, and to offer an outline, as coherently organized as possible, of the remaining realms of greatest promise.

The Bible in Ronsard's Poetry

Perhaps it was even more of a commonplace in Ronsard's time than

[1] Paul Laumonier, critical edition of Ronsard, I, xxxiii. This edition, in progress since 1914, is hereafter referred to as Laum. The edition of the 1584 *Œuvres de P. de Ronsard* by Laumonier, published by Lemerre in 8 volumes, 1914-19, is hereafter indicated by LL.

it is in our own that Western literature has been nourished from three great sources: the Hebraic-Christian, the Hellenic, and the Roman. To understand the full relationship of Ronsard's poetry to each of these great bodies of writing, to each of these vast accumulations of human experience, would, one should imagine, be among the primary efforts of Ronsard scholarship.

Though it hardly occupies a position in his poetry comparable with that of the literatures of pagan antiquity, Biblical influence is present throughout the works of Ronsard. Unfortunately, however, scholars have not been attracted to this aspect of his poetry.[2] Recently Jean Frappier contributed an essay on Biblical inspiration in Ronsard's "Hymne de la Justice" to the volume of *Mélanges* in honor of the lamented Henri Chamard. He indicates to what an extent the hitherto accepted interpretation of certain poems of Ronsard may be modified by research in this direction:

> Un nouvel examen des sources nous mettra peut-être sur la voie d'une interprétation à mon avis plus exacte. L'érudition de Paul Laumonier a fort bien discerné les sources gréco-latines, principalement l'influence d'Hésiode (*Travaux et Jours*) et celle d'Aratos; je n'entends pas contester la justesse de ses rapprochements. En revanche, l'abondance des sources bibliques a échappé à son attention, car les quelques rapprochements qu'il établit avec la *Genèse*, l'*Exode*, les *Nombres* et le *Psaume* VIII sont loin de représenter la somme des emprunts faits par Ronsard au texte sacré. En réalité, les réminiscences bibliques sont constantes dans la plus grande partie de l'*Hymne;* elles s'ajoutent sans heurt aux sources païennes, les doublent, ou bien se fondent complètement avec elles. Cette imitation géminée est un exemple convaincant d'humanisme chrétien.[3]

The author then proceeds to a detailed study of the text of Ronsard's hymn and reveals the unsuspected wealth of Ronsard's knowledge of both the Old and New Testaments. So considerable is the evidence presented by M. Frappier that one feels that it would not take many inquiries carried through with equal success to transform materially our conception of Ronsard's orientation toward the literature of antiquity. It is clear that the subject of Ronsard and the Bible must be regarded as overlong and undeservedly ignored. It would be impossible to propose a worthier subject to the attention of Ronsard scholars.

Such a study, or series of studies, would seek the answers to a host of fascinating questions. What, for example, were the relative weights

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[2] Henry Guy, however, has pointed out in "Mignonne, allons voir si la rose . . . Réflexions sur un lieu commun," *Revue philomathique de Bordeaux et du Sud-Ouest*, V-VI (1902-03), 250-268 (p. 10 of the 1902 offprint), that the image of the evanescence of life in the celebrated lyric that he discusses "remonte au temps du roi David,—bonne et vieille noblesse."

[3] Jean Frappier, "L'Inspiration biblique et théologique de Ronsard dans l'*Hymne de la Justice*," *Mélanges Chamard* (Paris, 1951), p. 98.

of Biblical and pagan sources in the intellectual and spiritual formation of Ronsard? Was he more attracted to the New Testament or to the Old? In each of these great divisions of the Bible, which was his favorite book? What were the passages to which he was especially drawn? What permanent attitudes of personality or philosophy did Ronsard owe to the Bible? Can one discern any correlation between Ronsard's Biblical interests and the political movements of his time?

Even greater than the indifference shown to Ronsard's possible interest in the Bible has been that accorded to his debt to the post-Biblical literature of Christianity. Perhaps Ronsard knew this literature less well than he did the Bible. There is evidence, however, that he had read Tertullian and Origen; he seems to have known more than one composition of Prudentius; he was acquainted, according to Muret, with the *De nominibus divinis* of Saint Denis; and he had certainly read a good deal in Saint Augustine. It would be surprising if further study did not reveal wider reading in Christian literature. The present bibliography of the subject is exhausted with the mention of the single article of Maurice Lange, in 1913, on the sources of the *Discours*.[4]

Ronsard and Greece

Ronsard's interest in the literatures of ancient Greece[5] and Rome was more constant throughout his life than the attention he gave to Biblical or Christian literature, and the reflection of that interest is present everywhere in his work. Nevertheless, there exists but one study of Ronsard's obligations to Greek and Latin authors generally, that of William B. Cornelia on the poet's debt to antiquity for many of the allusions to nature which abound in his work.[6] Regrettably, this book is a somewhat dry compilation.

It may be that, in the actual number of borrowings, Ronsard's obligation to Rome would appear greater than that to Greece; but, when one bears in mind that it was Hellenic literature that was immensely the greater novelty for the generation of Ronsard, that its physical presence in Ronsard's pages is almost as massive as that of Rome, and that his mastery of the literature of Greece was the central achievement that Ronsard wished posterity to remember to his honor (as the epitaph among the *Derniers Vers*[7] clearly demonstrates)—

[4] "Quelques sources probables des *Discours* de Ronsard," *RHL*, XX (1913), 789-816.

[5] See Paul Laumonier, "Sur la bibliothèque de Ronsard," *RSS*, XIV (1927), 315-335, for a discussion of several Greek books that belonged to the poet. See also my articles on "Ronsard's Early Philosophy," *SP*, XLV (1948), 119-133, and "A Flame among the Fagots: Ronsard on his Education as a Hellenist," *Mélanges Chamard*, pp. 81-90.

[6] *The Classical Sources of the Nature References in Ronsard's Poetry* (New York, 1934). Reviewed by the writer in *French Review*, IX (1936), 330-333.

[7] LL, VI, 9.

then one is compelled to conclude that the relationship of Ronsard with the literature of Greece constitutes one of the least frequented areas of significant Ronsard research.

One of the earliest dissertations on Ronsard was that of Eugène Gandar, who wrote very intelligently, and sometimes caustically, on the subject of Ronsard's debt to Homer and Pindar.[8] Certain pages of Pierre de Nolhac's *Ronsard et l'humanisme*[9] contributed new light. A score of years later an article by M. Georges Rency[10] revealed the existence of a copy of Homer that appears to have been a gift from Dorat to Ronsard; but the relationship of Ronsard to Homer has never received the full scrutiny that it merits. The work of Gandar, now a century old, divided its attention between Homer and Pindar.[11] Its treatment of the Homeric aspects of Ronsard's poetry is largely confined to the *Franciade* and two or three other works. A renewed discussion of the subject, using Laumonier's notes, which have greatly increased our knowledge of Ronsard's sources in Homer, would be more than justified.

A similar task was undertaken by the writer in his work on the debt of Ronsard to Pindar.[12] Paul Laumonier had felt that Ronsard had raised himself by main force to a level of artificial inspiration in the Pindaric odes, and that their tone was, on the whole, false. I followed him in that view, and have not substantially altered my opinion.

[8] *Ronsard considéré comme imitateur d'Homère et de Pindare* (Metz, 1854).

[9] Paris, 1921. See particularly pp. 69-73 for the manner in which Dorat taught the poetry of Homer, and pp. 123-129 for valuable information on the relationship between the *Franciade* and the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. These latter pages were formed from the article that Nolhac published about the same time on "Ronsard lecteur d'Homère," *Revue Critique des Idées et des Livres*, XXXI (1921), 513-521.

[10] "Un Homère ayant appartenu à Ronsard et annoté de sa main," *Bull. de l'Acad. Royale de Langue et de Litt. françaises*, XX (1941), 41-56. See my "Ronsard Studies," *BHR*, XII (1950), 349-350, for comment on this discovery. Charles-André Grouas, basing his research on the materials used by Rency, published the following articles in *Quo Vadis*: "Un Discours latin inédit de Pierre de Ronsard," June-July-Aug. 1950, pp. 31-39; "Un Manuscrit inédit de Pierre de Ronsard," Dec.-Jan.-Feb. 1950-51, pp. 4-12; "Dernière partie du Commentaire des marginales de l'*Iliade*," Jan.-Feb.-Mar. 1952, pp. 21-27. These articles have been brought together in a brochure, *Un Manuscrit inédit de Pierre de Ronsard* (Aurillac, 1951), with an introduction by J. L. Aubrun; it was excellently reviewed by Professor V. L. Saulnier in *BHR*, XV (1953), 150-152. The preparation of M. Grouas for scholarly work of this nature is similar to that of Rency, and his methods are not less questionable. Professor Raymond Lebègue, writing in *Renaissance News*, IV (1951), 60, observed that Grouas " . . . révèle son incompétence en expertise d'écriture et en paléographie. Aucun savant, après avoir lu sa prétendue démonstration, ne croira qu'il a découvert des autographes de Ronsard."

[11] A more recent study divides its attention between Homer and Du Bartas. See A. Emerson Creore, "Ronsard, Du Bartas, and the Homeric Comparison," *CL*, III (1951), 152-159.

[12] *The Pindaric Odes of Ronsard* (Paris, 1937). See my "Ronsard Studies," *BHR*, XII, 350-351, and my article on "Ronsard and Du Bellay on their Pindaric Collaboration," *RR*, XXXIII (1942), 1-25.

Nevertheless, it may be that certain positive aspects of Ronsard's adaptations of Pindar have been slighted, that Professor Henri M. Peyre was correct when he wrote that one of the present needs of Ronsard research is the rehabilitation of the Pindaric aspects of the poet's accomplishment,[13] and that M. Jean Baillou was equally correct in believing that "l'artifice compte peu en face de la grandeur."[14] In any event, the influence of Pindar in the rest of Ronsard's work also merits the attention of scholars.[15]

The only other Greek lyric poet whose influence upon Ronsard has been the subject of a separate study is Anacreon. This work, by Besch,[16] has been inaccessible to me, and one wonders whether it contains insights into the relationship between Anacreon and Ronsard which do not appear in the various chapters that Laumonier devoted in his thesis to the "ode légère."[17]

The influence of Theocritus and Bion has not been entirely overlooked. The story told by the Syracusan poet of the love of Heracles for the youth Hylas has been treated by Ronsard, André Chénier, and Leconte de Lisle. These three versions are discussed by P. Moreau in an excellent article entitled "Les trois Hylas,"[18] in which the fortunes of this theme are traced in antiquity, in the Renaissance, and in modern times, to show that the three modern incarnations of Hylas are as much the children of their own centuries as of Hellenic antiquity (p. 435). The influence of Theocritus and Apollonius of Rhodes on two *Hymnes* ("Pollux et Castor" and "Calais et Zethes," re-

[13] *L'Influence des littératures antiques sur la littérature française moderne* (New Haven, 1941), p. 34.

[14] Chapter on the Pléiade in the new edition (Paris, 1948-49) of *Littérature française* by Bédier and Hazard, published under the direction of Professor Pierre Martino, I, 238, col. 2.

[15] It is perhaps worth noting that the influence in France of Ronsard's imitation of the Pindaric style was studied in a pamphlet of 14 pages by Hugues Vaganay, *Les Odes pindariques après Ronsard* (Mâcon, 1923), and in an article by the same scholar, "Le premier écho des odes pindariques de Ronsard," *Bull. du Bibliophile*, Jan. 1, 1929, pp. 212-219. See also Marcel Raymond's dissertation, *L'Influence de Ronsard sur la poésie française (1550-1585)* (Paris, 1927), *passim*, and especially the auxiliary thesis, *Bibliographie critique de Ronsard en France*.

[16] *L'Anacréontisme dans le lyrisme de Ronsard*. Recueil des positions de thèses pour le diplôme d'études supérieures. Faculté de Lettres de Paris, 1906. This is the title as it appears in Lanson's *Manuel bibliographique*, No. 1643 of the 1925 edition. But in *RSS*, VI (1919), 17, note 1, the title is given in the following form: *L'Anacréontisme au XVI^e siècle*.

[17] *Ronsard poète lyrique* (Paris, 1909, 1923[2], 1932[3]). The "ode légère" is treated in Sec. II. One awaits with interest the publication of the Lyons dissertation by Mlle Sestier on "Anacréon et les poètes de la Pléiade."

[18] *Mélanges Joseph Vianey* (Paris, 1934), pp. 425-435. The *Manuel de bibliographie littéraire* of Mlle Jeanne Giraud conveys an erroneous impression (p. 8, col. 2) in replacing the name of Chénier by that of Parny, who is treated briefly.

spectively) of Ronsard, is pointed out by H. Bochet.[19] Special mention should be made of the article by James Hutton on "Ronsard and the Greek Anthology,"[20] which formed the basis of the chapter on Ronsard in Professor Hutton's volume on *The Greek Anthology in France and in the Latin Writers of the Netherlands to the Year 1800*.[21]

The only study of the influence of Plato in the work of Ronsard is the one by Raymond Lebègue, excellent and of solid workmanship, but necessarily fragmentary, for it deals only with the *Republic*, whose fortune it traces in the period of the French Renaissance.[22] But this, of course, is not the sole dialogue of Plato that Ronsard read in his unusually studious life. We should like to know the nature and extent of his obligation to the *Symposium* and to the *Timaeus;* for there is considerable evidence in his work of familiarity with both of these, as well as with the *Ion* and the *Phaedrus*. How did Ronsard regard the Platonic doctrine of reminiscence, and did his attitude toward it undergo an evolution during his lifetime? What relationship, if any, did this attitude have toward his understanding of the theory of ideas? In what way, if at all, was this theory associated with the concept of Platonic love in Ronsard's mind, and what was his feeling with respect to that awkward principle? How did his contradictory tendencies toward the ideal and the divine, in contrast with his sensualism and materialism, emerge in his relationships with women throughout his career, as these are recorded in his poetry? Is it possible to reconstruct the psychological evolution of the stages of this conflict, particularly as it became intensified during the period of his friendship with Hélène de Surgères, a professed enthusiast of the doctrine of Platonic love? This entire subject, competently examined, may contain more than one surprise even for those who are well read in Ronsard. Again, on the questions of poetic inspiration, and of the

[19] *Mélanges Bernard Bouvier* (Geneva, 1920), pp. 8, 11. For Florent Chrestien's assertion that in these hymns Ronsard had plagiarized Folengo, Theocritus, and "tes compagnons," i.e., Baïf, see Alexandre Eckhardt, "Ronsard accusé de plagiat: l'invention de l'églogue," *RSS*, VII (1920), 235-247. There is a note by P. T. (Philippe Tamizey de Larroque?) on "Ronsard et Parthénius de Nicée" in *RHL*, I (1894), 185, which gives the source of Ronsard's composition, "Discours de l'équité des vieux Gaulois" (LL, III, 215-225), as the *Peri erotikon pathematon* of Parthenius. A facsimile of the title page of Ronsard's copy of the Latin translation of this work by Janus Cornarius may be seen facing p. 332 of the article by Laumonier on Ronsard's library. See above, note 5. The volume in question, which bears Ronsard's signature, is discussed on pp. 333-334.

[20] *SP*, XL (1943), 103-127.

[21] Ithaca, N. Y., 1946, pp. 350-374. This volume was reviewed by the present writer in the *Romanic Review*, XXXVIII (1947), 262-265.

[22] "La *République* de Platon et la Renaissance française," *Lettres d'Humanité*, II (1943), 141-165. For the poet's debt to Plutarch see A. H. Krappe, "Pierre de Ronsard's 'Hymne de la Mort' and Plutarch's 'Consolatio ad Apollonium,'" *MLR*, XVII (1922), 150-156.

sacerdotal function of the poet, to which Ronsard returned frequently and with very marked attention—how great was his debt to Plato for the formulation of his ideas in this realm? In a totally different domain, what did he think of Plato as a political theorist? To all of these questions there are definite answers in the works of Ronsard.

We know little about Ronsard's understanding of the role and contributions of the pre-Homeric poets: Eumolpus, Musaeus, Orpheus, Linus. It would be instructive, also, to have a full account, at last, of Ronsard's obligation to Hesiod, a subject that has been completely disregarded except in incidental references. There is a totally unexplored region to be charted of Ronsard's knowledge of the great lyric poets of Greece other than Pindar—Sappho, Alcaeus, Simonides, Bacchylides, and the rest—who visit his pages occasionally and some of whom he imitated time and time again. The study of Ronsard's debt to the iambic poet Archilochus has also been ignored by students, and deserves to be written. We know little of Ronsard's judgments of the Greek tragedians, even less of his opinions of Aristophanes[23] and Menander, all of whom are mentioned, and sometimes imitated, with varying degrees of frequency. Among the Alexandrian poets, Callimachus and Apollonius of Rhodes are most often found in Ronsard's verses. Here again, save for the erudite notes of Laumonier's critical edition, scholarship has been almost completely silent. Nothing has been written on Ronsard and Herodotus, Aristotle, Lucian, Longus, or any of the other prose writers.

What of Ronsard's debt to the imagery of the Greek poets? How did his understanding of the ancient mythology evolve? Did his conception of it represent an advance upon the thinking of his predecessors? The contributions hitherto made hardly more than graze the

[23] If chance played something less than the primary role in determining the sequence of scholarly investigations, perhaps by now we should have had the study that has been so long wanting of the vexed question of the relationship between Ronsard and Aristophanes. The existence of this relationship is affirmed by a tradition that goes back to 1586, when Claude Binet, the first biographer of Ronsard, attributed to him the authorship of a translation of a fragment of the *Plutus*. This translation (incipit: "O Jupiter, ô Dieux . . . ," LL, VI, 462-479) appeared for the first time among the "Pièces Retranchées" in the collective edition of 1617. But Laumonier has given more than one excellent reason for doubting its authenticity; see his critical edition of *La Vie de P. de Ronsard de Claude Binet (1586)*, (Paris, 1910), pp. 102-103, and LL, VIII, 97-98. On the other hand, Henry Guy, "Les Sources françaises de Ronsard," *RHL*, IX (1902), 217-256, accepts without question (p. 220) the validity of this attribution. Another scholar whose opinion carries great weight has said, "L'attribution à Ronsard est aujourd'hui contestée, pour des raisons qui ne me paraissent pas suffisantes"; see Marie Delcourt, *La Tradition des comiques anciens en France avant Molière* (Paris, 1934), p. 5. Raymond Lebègue asserts, "il est probable que ce fragment est de Ronsard, mais Baïf a peut-être collaboré à cette traduction." *Ronsard, l'homme et l'œuvre* (Paris, 1950), p. 20.

surface of the subject.[24] The mythological content of Ronsard's poetry is probably its most massive element. Unquestionably there is material in the works of Ronsard for a study of considerable appeal by a mind which moves congenially among the myths of Hellas.

And the most interesting, the most searching questions still remain to be asked: What insight did Ronsard have into the nature of Greek life and thought? What function did he serve as a propagator of Greek culture in France? What lessons did he draw from the history of Greece? Was he in any way touched by Hellenic attitudes toward religion? To what degree was he able to assimilate, enrich, and transmit to posterity the thought and feeling of Hellas on birth, death, and human destiny?

Ronsard and Rome

One might imagine that the indifference with respect to Ronsard's debt to the writers of Greece could not be duplicated for the Latin authors. The facts, however, are quite otherwise.

The presence of Lucretius in Ronsard's poetry has been discussed by Ferdinando Neri[25] and C. A. Fusil.[26] In K. P. Harrington's volume

[24] Here the work of Hans Buschner, *Die Bedeutung der antiken Mythologie für die französiche Ode bei deren Entstehung* (Leipzig, 1909), might be serviceable, though Teil II, "Die Mythologie," occupies but a score of pages, 53-73. See also the article by the lamented Robert V. Merrill, "Eros and Anteros," *Speculum*, XIX (1944), 265-284, especially pp. 282-284. One might also study the literature that has grown up since 1924 concerning the meaning of the word *fée* in Ronsard: the review by Jean Plattard of Gustave Cohen's *Ronsard, sa vie et son œuvre*, in *RSS*, XI (1924), 330-333; G. Prévot, "Le Mot *Fée* chez Ronsard," *ibid.*, XII (1925), 169-171; Paul Laumonier, "Les Fées dans l'œuvre de Ronsard," *MP*, *XXXVIII* (1941), 319-324; and the brief note by Marcel Françon, "La Fée Morgain et Ronsard," *RP*, II (1948-49), 239-240, which, however, has no relation to the controversy as to the meaning of *fée*.

[25] "Lucrezio e la poesia di Ronsard," *Atene e Roma*, N.S., I (1920), 198-212; Neri refutes the opinion that the influence of Lucretius was not felt in French poetry until the time of Desportes.

[26] "La Renaissance de Lucrèce au XVI^e siècle en France," *RSS*, XV (1928), 134-150. The following studies may also be of interest: Eleanore Belowski, *Lukrez in der französischen Literatur der Renaissance* (Berlin, 1934), which devotes a chapter (pp. 20-35) to Ronsard and Lucretius and has a useful index (pp. 129-132) of borrowings of French Renaissance authors from *De rerum natura*; Gustav R. Hocke, *Lukrez in Frankreich von der Renaissance bis zur Revolution* (Cologne, 1935), chap. V, sec. 1, "Ronsard und der Humanismus im Zusammenhang mit Lukrez"; H. Vaganay, "Le seizième siècle a-t-il pu lire Lucrèce en français?" *Bull. de l'Assoc. Guill. Budé* (July 1932), pp. 19-21—Vaganay's answer is in the affirmative: he mentions a verse translation by Guillaume des Autels, "mais demeurée manuscrite" (does it still exist?), and some two hundred lines done into French verse "dans la traduction de la *Mythologie* ... extraite du Latin de Noël le Comte ... par Jean de Montlyard (Lyon, MDC)"; J. Baillou, "Sur les traductions françaises de Lucrèce," *ibid.* (Jan. 1933), pp. 16-17, which shows that the translation by Des Autels must have been ready, at least in part, by 1557. The article by Albert Counson, "Lucrèce en France. L'Antilucrèce," *Musée Belge*, VI (1902), 403 ff., contains nothing on either Ronsard or the Pléiade.

on Catullus[27] there is a brief section devoted to Ronsard. Virgil has received rather favored treatment; W. H. Storer devoted a volume to his influence on Ronsard's work in general;[28] a more limited account of the relationship of Ronsard to Virgil was presented many years earlier by Paul Lange;[29] and more recently Robert V. Merrill had added somewhat to our knowledge of the question.[30] The relationship of Ronsard to Horace was cursorily examined by Eduard Stemplinger.[31] The influence of Propertius and Tibullus on French literature of the Renaissance, and particularly on Ronsard, was studied by Robert E. Hallowell in 1942.[32]

Very little, if anything, that would illuminate Ronsard's obligation to Latin literature can be added to the titles mentioned. The work that must be done, before we can see in true perspective the full relationship between Ronsard and Rome, is very great.

The volume by W. H. Storer has the great merit of establishing the parallels between Ronsard and Virgil.[33] But this is only the beginning of the task. The presence of Virgil is so thoroughly diffused in the poetry of Ronsard that, despite one or two available studies on the relationship of the poets, one may justifiably hope for another which will take as its point of departure the abundant parallels already discovered and proceed to an evaluation of Ronsard's Virgilian aspects. It would be instructive to know the nature of Ronsard's attraction to Virgil, as this may be deduced from the passages upon which he drew most consistently. Was Ronsard closer in spirit to Virgil than to Homer, to the Latin poets generally than to the Greek poets? Did the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* occupy in his work a place that approached in importance that of the *Aeneid?*[34] On the other hand, to what ex-

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[27] *Catullus and his Influence* (Boston, 1932), pp. 110-112.

[28] *Virgil and Ronsard* (Paris, 1923).

[29] *Ronsards Franciade und ihr Verhältnis zu Vergils Aeneide* (Wurzen, 1887).

[30] "Ronsard and the Burning Grove," *MP*, XXXVII (1939-40), 337-341. In the article by Mme Alice Hulubei on "Virgile en France au XVI^e siècle," *RSS*, XVIII (1931), 1-77, see especially pp. 65-66 for a brief comparison between the *Aeneid* and the *Franciade* and for quotations from Ronsard's prefaces to his epic (1572 and 1587) showing how his respect for Virgil grew with the passing years.

[31] "Ronsard und der Lyriker Horaz. Eine Quellenstudie," *ZFSL*, XXVI (1904), 70-91.

[32] *The Fortune of the Roman Elegists, Propertius and Tibullus, in Sixteenth-Century French Literature, with Special Reference to Ronsard.* Abstract of dissertation (University of Illinois, 1942). Mr. Hallowell has since published a volume on *Ronsard and the Conventional Roman Elegy* (Urbana, 1954), which has the merit of carrying the story of the genre back to Hellenic and Roman beginnings, and which is much superior in critical grasp to the work by Mlle Dora Frey, *Le Genre élégiaque dans l'œuvre de Ronsard* (Liège, 1939). See my comment on the latter work in "Ronsard Studies," *BHR*, XII, 352-353.

[33] See note 28 above.

[34] Here the splendid thesis of Mme Alice Hulubei, *L'Églogue en France au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1938), would no doubt be of great value to the student. See especially chaps. XI and XIII.

tent, if at all, did Virgil's epic penetrate the lyrics of Ronsard? In a word, how did the experience of Virgil's poetry modify the personality and the writings of Ronsard? What new value emerged from the meeting of these two minds?

A similar set of questions may be raised with respect to Horace, who probably exerted the greatest single literary influence on Ronsard. Without question, his greatest obligation was to the *Odes*; and Stemplinger was more than justified in beginning with a study of Ronsard's debt to the lyrics. But it would be of interest to know, also, to what extent the *Epodes*, the *Satires*, and the *Epistles* enter into Ronsard's work, and to trace the influence of the *Ars poetica* throughout his career.[35]

Perhaps the most singular omission of scholarship in the realm of Ronsard's debt to Latin literature is the influence of Ovid, who, after Virgil and Horace, contributed in greatest measure to Ronsard's poetic substance. It would be difficult to exaggerate Ronsard's debt to the *Metamorphoses*; and the obligation to the *Amores*, the *Ars amatoria*, the *Heroïdes*, and the other popular compositions of Ovid is also

[35] The study by Raymond Lebègue, "Horace en France pendant la Renaisxsince," *HR*, III (1936), 141-164, 289-308, 384-419 (an offprint of the series exists, Paris, 1936), would be of considerable help in preparing a study of Horace and Ronsard. See pp. 296-301 for a succinct but richly factual account. The article on "Orazio nella letteratura francese" contributed by Jules Marouzeau to *Orazio nella letteratura mondiale* (Rome, 1936), pp. 59-78, in celebration of the bimillenium of Horace, is a good survey of Horace's fortune in France, but the unavoidable brevity of treatment creates the impression of a chaplet of Horatian and, for a page or two, of Ronsardian commonplaces. Interesting contributions to the study of the tradition of Horace may be found in the work of Paul F. Saintonge, Leslie G. Burgevin, and Helen Griffith, *Horace: Three Phases of his Influence* (Chicago, 1936), particularly the appreciative lecture by Professor Saintonge on "The Influence of Horace on Ronsard and Montaigne," pp. 3-43; and Eduard Stemplinger's *Horaz im Urteil der Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig, 1921), chap. V, "Horaz als Muster," contains material on Ronsard and Du Bellay. On the special question of the *Ars poetica* and its relationship to Ronsard's theory of poetry, a volume that ought to be consulted for its valuable Introduction is the edition by André Boulanger of *L'Art Poëtique de Jacques Peletier du Mans (1555)* (Paris, 1930). Peletier's translation of Horace's work on poetic theory was first published anonymously not in 1544, as scholars have hitherto believed, but in 1541, as Bernard Weinberg has shown in "La première édition de la traduction d'Horace par Jacques Peletier," *BHR*, XIV (1952), 294-300. Ronsard was probably familiar with this work of Peletier, especially with the valuable prefatory remarks in the dedication to Cretofle Perot. These are reproduced in full by Professor Weinberg in their original form and with the variants of the second edition (1545); the text of the second edition is given in part by Henri Chamard, *Histoire de la Pléiade* (Paris, 1939-40), I, 151-152, and in full by Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française* (Paris, 1905-32), II, 81-82. The article by Paul Laumonier on "L'Art poétique de J. Peletier du Mans, d'après un libre récent," *Rev. de la Renaissance*, II (1901), 248-276, should of course not be overlooked, although, being in the first instance a review of Henri Chamard's thesis, *De Jacobi Peletarii Cenomanensis Arte Poetica* (University of Lille, 1900), it does not deal primarily with the question of Ronsard's theoretical debt to Horace.

very appreciable. The thesis of William L. Wiley[36] would provide an excellent point of departure for a study of the relationship between Ovid and Ronsard. We should be curious, in the case of Ovid, about such questions as: To which of the myths of the *Metamorphoses* did Ronsard return more than once with special favor? Is the influence of Ovid felt more extensively in Ronsard's *Amours* than elsewhere? If this is the case, are we to say that the *Amores* and the *Ars amatoria* are preponderant in this influence, or is there a surprise in store for us here, too? Ronsard refers a dozen times to the allegorical interpretation of mythology. To what extent can we trace in his poetry the continuing influence of the mediaeval attitude toward Ovid, based upon an ethico-allegorical interpretation of the myths?[37]

Ronsard read the *Satires* of Juvenal and Persius, as well as those of Horace. Satire must certainly have had a considerable attraction for him, since early in his career he expressed the hope that a great satirist would arise in France to give her supremacy in this genre.[38] We see Ronsard struggling between his strong satiric impulses and his sense of deference to the King when, at the end of 1574, he sends to Henry III that most curious of New Year's presents entitled "Estrennes au Roy Henry III, envoyées à Sa Majesté au mois de decembre," asking permission to release the satiric vein:

> Sire, voici le mois où le peuple Romain
> Qui tenoit tout le monde enclos dedans la main,
> Donnoit aux serviteurs, par maniere de rire,
> Congé de raconter tout ce qu'ils vouloyent dire:
> Donnez-moy (s'il vous plaist) un semblable congé,
> J'ay la langue de rongne & le palais mangé,

[36] "Ovid in the French Renaissance," Harvard dissertation of 1930; for a concise résumé see *Harvard Univ. Summaries of Theses* (1930), pp. 253-255. Chap. VI of the typescript of the dissertation, "Poetry after 1550—The Pléiade," should be read attentively, and especially sec. 3 on "Ronsard and Ovid," pp. 224-258, which is the fullest treatment of the subject that I know. The author realizes, however, that in a work of so wide a scope it is impossible to do full justice to Ovid and Ronsard in a single chapter: "The material borrowed from Ovid... would in itself, if presented with suitable commentary, fill at least one generous volume" (p. 225). The cautious student, however, will remember that what may appear to be a borrowing from Ovid or any other Latin writer may represent a direct debt to a Greek author. The volume by Georges Lafaye (see note 41) may be of assistance in making the necessary distinctions in the case of Ovid. It is regrettable that the dissertation by Professor Wiley has not been published.

[37] See Jean Seznec, *La Survivance des dieux antiques* (London, 1940), pp. 83-84; Lester K. Born, "Ovid and Allegory," *Speculum*, IX (1934), 362-379; Joseph Engels, *Etudes sur l' "Ovide Moralisé"* (Groningen and Paris, 1945), which, unfortunately for our purpose, deals more with questions of authorship, text, and assignment of date than with that of the allegorical interpretation of mythology; Fausto Ghisalberti, "L'Ovidius Moralizatus di Pierre Bersuire," *Studj Romanzi*, XXIII (1933), 5-136, of great importance for understanding the imperious motives that prompted attempts to allegorize, in a Christian direction, the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, sometimes called the pagan Bible.

[38] Laum., V, 263, line 73 and note 5, and cf. the remarks of Laumonier, XI, v.

Il faut que je les frotte, ou il faut que je meure,
Tant le mal grateleux me demange à toute heure,
Puis voici le Printemps où se purge un chacun,
Il faut que mon humeur se purge sur quelcun:
Mais je ne puis sans vous! sans vostre faveur, SIRE,
Je n'ose envenimer ma langue à la Satyre.
Si est-ce que la rage & l'ulcere chancreux
Me tient de composer: le mal est dangereux,
Et ne plaist pas à tous: mais si je vous puis plaire,
Il me plaist, vous plaisant, d'escrire et de desplaire.[39]

According to Binet, who had seen them in Ronsard's hands, the poet withheld from publication a number of satires, "nostre siecle n'estant digne ny capable de correction."[40]

There is, I believe, no full treatment of Ronsard's relation to the Latin satirists, and no similar studies affecting Statius, Valerius Flaccus, and Martial, or Ausonius and Claudian, to all of whom Ronsard was more or less indebted. With respect to the Latin prose writers, the neglect may accurately be described as total—nothing on Cicero, Livy, the Plinys, Quintilian, all of whom Ronsard read and who must have left some impression on his mind and on his writing. From such investigations we might expect answers to questions like the following: Which of the Latin writers did Ronsard favor at varying stages of his career? What was his general judgment of Latin poetry as compared with Greek? What was the curve of this opinion throughout his life? To what extent was an apparent debt to Latin poetry an actual, though hidden, debt to Greek literature? to French?[41] Was Ronsard's conception of mythology more deeply indebted to Greek than to Roman sources?

The Neo-Latin Influence in the Poetry of Ronsard

In the first half of the sixteenth century France witnessed a great vogue of Neo-Latin poetry, which anticipated many of the ideals of the Pléiade. Foremost among these was the ambition to assimilate the substance of the poetry of antiquity. Before the vogue of Neo-Latin poetry declined in the second half of the century a very impressive body of Neo-Latin verse had been written, to which poets of many nationalities had contributed.[42] Ronsard read most of these poets and,

[39] LL, III, 205-206.

[40] *La Vie de P. de Ronsard*, pp. 40-41.

[41] The answers to such questions might, in the case of Ovid, for example, be sought, in part, in studies like those of Georges Lafaye, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide et leurs modèles grecs* (Paris, 1904), and E. K. Rand, "The Metamorphoses of Ovid in 'Le Roman de la Rose,'" *Studies in the History of Culture Dedicated to Waldo Gifford Leland* (Menasha, Wis., 1942), pp. 103-121.

[42] Some idea of the extent of this body of poetry will be conveyed by the partial list of volumes of Neo-Latin poetry composed by French authors, given in H. Chamard, *Joachim du Bellay* (Lille, 1900), p. 105, note 1; but see the same author's supplementary remarks in his *Histoire de la Pléiade*, I, 171.

following his habit, borrowed from them as he borrowed from the poets of classical antiquity. This raises a series of interesting questions: To what extent are the basic poetic themes of Ronsard already present in the works of the Neo-Latin poets? What was the degree of Ronsard's originality in the themes treated by them and him? In what periods of his life did he especially study and imitate Marullus? Pontano? Flaminio? Angeriano? Second? Muret? Théodore de Bèze? How much did he owe to Dorat's Neo-Latin poetry? What proportion of his apparent indebtedness to Roman poets arose by way of the works of the Neo-Latin poets? Was his knowledge of Anacreon acquired from the Greek text, or was he largely or entirely indebted to Jean Second? Did Navagero and Sannazaro stand between him and the Greek text of Theocritus? It would be interesting to have a clearer idea, too, of Ronsard's conception of the dithyramb. How much of this conception was, or could be, based upon authentic information? In drawing upon the "Hymnus Baccho" of Marullus for so many lines of his "Hinne de Bacus" and of his "Dithyrambes à la Pompe du Bouc de Jodelle,"[43] was Ronsard following a model that would reliably communicate the attitudes of antiquity, assuming that to have been within his intention? If he was, what were the sources upon which Marullus himself had drawn?

To all of these questions no answer has as yet been given, unless one admits as a very partial one the article of P. Kuhn on the presence of Neo-Latin influence in Ronsard's eclogues.[44] The two volumes of a more general character to which one might allude, those of Paul Van Tieghem[45] and D. Murarasu,[46] contribute even less to the illumination of these matters, although each is a competent work of orientation in its own field. The recent studies of Franco Simone must

[43] See *Ronsard poète lyrique*, Appendice, pp. 735-742, Pièces just., I, "Document pour l'authenticité des Dithyrambes de 1553," for the presentation in parallel columns of the relevant passages from Marullus and Ronsard. Cf. Laum., V, 53-76, and VI, 185-190, notes, *passim*. See also *Ronsard poète lyrique*, pp. 759-760, Piéces just., IV, "L' 'Hymme à la Nuit,' imité de Pontano," for a similar presentation of the latter's "Hymnus in Noctem" and Ronsard's "Hinne à la Nuit"; and cf. Laum., II, 21-22. A comparison between Ronsard's "Ode à Macée" and compositions by the Neo-Latin poet Salmon Macrin and the Pseudo-Gallus may be found in the same Appendice, pp. 760-765, Pièces just., V, "L' 'Ode à Macée' et ses sources, entre autres le 'Carmen ad Lydiam' du Pseudo-Gallus, et le 'Carmen ad Gelonidem' de S. Macrin." Cf. Laum., I, 201-203.

[44] "L'Influence néolatine dans les églogues de Ronsard," *RHL*, XXI (1914), 309-325. The title is not as exact as one might desire. In reality, the article deals almost exclusively with Ronsard's debt to Navagero and not to Neo-Latin poetry in general. See also Marcel Françon, "Navagero et Ronsard," *Italica*, XXV (1948), 296-299, which, however, does not add to our knowledge of Ronsard's Neo-Latin sources.

[45] *La Littérature latine de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1944).

[46] *La Poésie néo-latine et la Renaissance des lettres antiques en France (1500-1549)* (Paris, 1928).

not be neglected;[47] they contain valuable information and sharp insights into fields beyond those that they nominally cover.

Ronsard and Italy

General Aspects. Literary historians have devoted considerable attention to the vast problem of the intellectual affinities between Italy and France.[48] Two recent publications provide especially precious assistance in the exploration of this field; they will reveal its full bibliographical resources to the scholar who follows the avenues of research they suggest.[49] The basic researches of Picot on Franco-Italian intellectual relations, the pioneering studies of Platonism by Lefranc, the guide to Italian philosophical influence during the French Renaissance by Baillou, and the discussion by Festugière of the prevalence of Ficino's philosophy of love in sixteenth-century France will be found rewarding, even though their bearing upon our subject is only occasionally direct.[50] Among the researches that deal specific-

[47] See *L'avviamento poetico di Pierre de Ronsard (1540-1545)* (Florence, 1942), pp. 23 ff., for judicious observations on Salmon Macrin's influence in France; "Note sulla fortuna del Petrarca in Francia nella prima metà del Cinquecento," *Giornale stor. della lett. it.*, CXXVII (1950), 1-59—though dealing with a period long anterior to that of Ronsard, this article may be consulted to advantage for the light that it sheds on the tradition and influence of Petrarch's Latin works in France.

[48] This is not nearly so true of the relations between France and the Iberian peninsula, which were, of course, much more tenuous. Studies of the reciprocal influences between Ronsard and writers of Spain and Portugal are almost nonexistent. Paul Laumonier wrote on "Ronsard et les Espagnols" in *Bull. Hispanique*, XLIII (1941), 168-171, but revealed only the slenderest of contacts. A. F. G. Bell brought a number of different cultures together in "Four Poets of the Renaissance: Ronsard, Camoens, Luis de León, and Spenser," *Estudos em honor de Da. Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcellos* (Coimbra, 1930). The contribution by Marcel Bataillon to the *Mélanges Chamard*, pp. 311-325, "Avènement de la poésie heptasyllabique moderne en Espagne," reveals that Gil Polo's allusion to *versos franceses* was a reference to the alexandrine as employed by Ronsard and his contemporaries, and ventures the hypothesis that the heptasyllabic verse of the literatures of southern Europe is in reality an adaptation of the French hexasyllabic line first employed by Ronsard in the odes of 1550 and 1553, and by Du Bellay in 1558 (p. 313). The discussion by Alfredo Pimenta, "Pierre de Ronsard foi Cavalleiro de Christo?" in the *Mélanges Laumonier* (Paris, 1935), pp. 243-255, may be disregarded for comparatist purposes, since it merely reproduces and comments upon a letter written by Charles IX on Nov. 14, 1570 to the Portuguese Court requesting for Ronsard the honor of admission to the Order of Christ.

[49] The first is the contribution by Carlo Pellegrini, "Relazioni tra la letteratura italiana e la letteratura francese," to vol. IV (*Letterature comparate*, pp. 41-49) of the series edited by Attilio Momigliano, *Problemi ed orientamenti critici di lingua e di letteratura italiano*, 4 vols. (Milan, 1948-49). The second is the Baldensperger-Friederich *Bibliography of Comparative Literature* (Chapel Hill, 1950); see Book Four, chap. III, "Italian Influences upon France," pp. 395-397.

[50] Emile Picot, *Les Français italianisants au XVI^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1906-07), and "Les Italiens en France au XVI^e siècle," *Bull. Italien*, I (1901), 92-137, 269-294, II (1902), 23-53, 108-147, III (1903), 7-36, 118-142, 219-234,

ally with Ronsard's relation to Italian literature, the volume by Natale Addamiano,[51] which has been of value in making Ronsard known to a generation of Italian students, is primarily an analytical study by genres of the work of the poet. It was not intended to satisfy the need for a discussion of the entire range of reciprocal obligations during and after the Renaissance between Ronsard and the writers of Italy.

DANTE AND RONSARD. Perhaps the most delicate problem of all is that of the possible influence of Dante on Ronsard, an influence which has been almost universally denied. In spite of the existence of a considerable group of studies on Dante's fame beyond the boundaries of Italy, and particularly in France, it would be profitless to seek among them a separate monograph or study relating the Florentine to the poet of Vendôme;[52] to the best of my knowledge such a discussion does not exist.

The tradition of Dantean influence in France was already old when Jacques Peletier, whose word and example counted so heavily with both Ronsard and Du Bellay, referred with praise to Dante as one who had contributed toward establishing the principle of writing in the vernacular.[53] Du Bellay, repeating the ground bass of the *Deffence*, tells Madame Marguerite in his composition, "D'escrire en sa langue":

IV (1904), 123-142, 294-315, XVII (1917), 61-75, 160-184, XVIII (1918), 28-36; Abel Lefranc, "Le Platonisme et la littérature en France à l'époque de la Renaissance (1500-1550)," which appeared first in *RHL*, III (1896), 1-44, and again in the same writer's *Grands écrivains français de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1914), pp. 63-137; Jean Baillou, "L'Influence de la pensée philosophique de la Renaissance italienne sur la pensée française. Etat présent des travaux relatifs au XVI^e^ siècle," *Rev. des Études Italiennes*, I (1936), 116-155; Jean Festugière, *La Philosophie de l'amour de Marsile Ficin et son influence sur la littérature française au XVI^e^ siècle* (Paris, 1941), reprinted from *Revista da Universidade de Coimbra*, VIII (1922), 396-564; Walter Mönch, *Die italienische Platonrenaissance und ihre Bedeutung für Frankreichs Literatur und Geistesgeschichte (1450-1550)* (Berlin, 1936).

[51] *Il Rinascimento in Francia. Pietro Ronsard (1524-1585)* (Palermo-Rome, 1925). See the review by Pierre Jourda in *RSS*, XIII (1926), 143-147.

[52] One may obtain a good, if summary, general view of Dante's influence in France from the dissertation of Hermann Oelsner, *Dante in Frankreich bis zum Ende des XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1898), but Ronsard is not mentioned; see also Albert Counson, *Dante en France* (Erlangen and Paris, 1906) and *Romanische Forschungen*, XXI (1907), 1-275, who shares the universal opinion that the influence of Dante upon Ronsard was very slight, if it existed at all; but the most important treatment of the subject is that of Arturo Farinelli, *Dante e la Francia dall'età media al secolo di Voltaire* (Milan, 1908), 2 vols., supplemented to a certain extent by the same writer's *Dante in Spagna, Francia, Inghilterra, Germania* (Turin, 1922), pp. 197-229, "A proposito di Dante e la Francia."

[53] Chamard, *Histoire de la Pléiade*, I, 152. Dorat wrote a preliminary poem in Latin for the edition of Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia* published in Paris in 1577, in which the Italian poet is compared with Lucretius. See Augé-Chiquet, *La Vie, les idées et l'œuvre de Jean-Antoine de Baïf* (Paris and Toulouse, 1909), p. 36 and note 2.

Quel siecle esteindra ta memoire,
O Boccace? & quels durs hyvers
Pouront jamais seicher la gloire,
Petrarque, de tes lauriers verds?

Qui verra la vostre muëtte,
Dante, & Bembe à l'esprit hautain?
Qui fera taire la musette
Du pasteur Nëapolitain?[54]

Even partially negative assertions are feeble in logic;[55] the absolutely negative proposition can be notoriously so. "Tra gli idoli che il Ronsard si sceglie, e al gregge suo impone, non v'era Dante." "Su di un commento di Dante il Ronsard avrebbe profondamente sbadigliato." Dante è come se non fosse esistito mai." "... Nessun indizio mai di ispirazione dantesca." "Finchè durò in Francia il prestigio della 'Pléiade,' durò . . . l'indifferenza piena per l'opera di Dante."[56] Five times does Farinelli thus deny the existence of any debt on the part of Ronsard and the Pléiade to Dante.[57] His position may be, on the whole, sounder than that of the anonymous author of the leading article on "Pierre de Ronsard" in the *London Times Literary Supplement* who, overlooking the fact that the *editio princeps* of the *Vita Nuova* appeared in 1576, courageously says of Ronsard's *Amours*: "All these earlier sonnets are filled with reminiscences of Dante and Petrarch . . . "[58] Yet Farinelli cannot help noticing that, in the polemical writings of Ronsard inspired by the religious wars, "L'invettiva di Dante par frema, a tratti, nell'elegia al Des Autels."[59] And he quotes two passages, Dantesque in tone, in which the anger of the French poet breaks out against the abuses of the Church.[60] Later, in comparing the epic of Ronsard with that of Dante, Farinelli says of a certain passage, "E il verso della *Franciade* ha non so che della fierezza di Dante."[61]

It may not be inopportune to add here a note or two to the evidence that Farinelli himself felt compelled to bring forward, in spite of, and against, his own hypothesis. They are offered not for their intrinsic importance, but solely because, together with the parallels presented by Farinelli, they may point toward a positive relationship.

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[54] Ed. Chamard, III, 99-100. The Neapolitan shepherd is Sannazaro.

[55] As we have seen in the case of the refutation by Neri and Fusil of the opinion that Ronsard owed no debt to Lucretius (see notes 25 and 26 above and note 57 below).

[56] Farinelli, *Dante e la Francia*, I, 424, 427, 428, 437.

[57] Similarly A. Counson, "Lucrèce en France. L'Antilucrèce," *Musée Belge*, VI (1902), 403, asserted that Lucretius was not known to French poetry before Desportes.

[58] Mar. 2, 1922, pp. 129-130. See p. 130, col. 1, for the quotation.

[59] Farinelli, I, 427-428.

[60] Laum., X, 354, lines 87-90 and 95-103.

[61] Farinelli, I, 428 and note 2; cf. LL, III, 168-169.

In the "Prosopopée de Beaumont, levrier du Roy, & de Charon," which describes the infernal descent of the spirit of the favorite greyhound of Charles IX, Charon politely invites the dog to make the crossing without the usual payment:

> Disant ainsi, la gondolle s'avance,
> Et le levrier d'un sault leger s'eslance
> Dedans l'esquif, que Charon roide & fort
> Comme un trait d'arc poussoit à l'autre bort.[62]

Although the framework of this dialogue may have been borrowed from Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead* and the description of Charon from the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, the striking comparison of the skiff to an arrow for speed seems to have been taken from Dante:

> Corda non pinse mai da sè saetta,
> che sì corresse via per l'aere snella,
> com' io vidi una nave piccioletta
> venir per l'acqua verso noi . . .[63]

The Italian poet is mentioned by name in the works of Ronsard only once, in a panegyric addressed "Au sieur Barthelemi Del-Bene" which was published by the literary executors of Ronsard's will, Galland and Binet, in the first posthumous edition (1587). Ronsard points out that the years bring perpetual change in the number and quality of the men of genius with whom a nation may be endowed. This has been true in all ages and in all countries, Italy among them:

> Depuis que ton Petrarque eut surmonté la Nuit
> De Dante, & Cavalcant, & de sa renommée,
> Claire comme un Soleil, eut la Terre semée,
> Fait citoyen du Ciel: nul apres luy n'a peu
> Grimper sur Helicon, pour y estre repeu
> A la table des Sœurs de leur saincte Ambrosie . . . [64]

Ronsard's meaning clearly is that Petrarch's fame has overcome the oblivion into which the names of Dante and Cavalcanti had fallen. Far from being an expression of contempt for the greatest of Florentines, this is really a restatement of the filiation of the Italian literary tradition. It is intended, as the context shows beyond question, as a compliment to Del Bene, himself a Florentine, a poet, and an admirer of Dante. To imagine, as did Farinelli,[65] that Ronsard intended to insult the memory of the poet, is to assume an insolence on the part

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[62] Laum., XIV, 116, lines 43-46.

[63] *Inferno*, VIII, 13-16, describes the approach of Phlegyas, rather than Charon, to Virgil and Dante in the fifth circle of Hell. What appears essential is the identity of the image in the two passages.

[64] LL, VI, 27.

[65] *Dante e la Francia*, I, 432: "Così procede l'ode meschina, con inalterato stile e spudorato encomio, fino ad uscire ne' versi, irriverenti alla memoria di Dante . . . "

of Ronsard which, irrespective of all other considerations, would have been psychologically impossible in view of the circumstances in which the poem was written[66] and the person for whom it was intended.[67]

PETRARCH AND RONSARD. Almost every aspect of the European and, indeed, the world influence of Petrarch has been investigated, and the bibliographical accumulation is formidable. Several instruments exist which enable the student rapidly to come to grips with the problem before us. An excellent view of the influence of the *Canzoniere* during the period of the Renaissance may be obtained from a recent article by Ernest H. Wilkins.[68] The reader who possesses a general acquaintance with the personality and works of Petrarch, and who seeks a guide to the particular problems (psychological, political, philosophical, religious, aesthetic) that arise about him, as well as information useful to the comparatist, would do well to examine also the section on "Il Petrarca e il petrarchismo" contributed by Carlo Calcaterra to the series recently edited by Attilio Momigliano.[69] But the most extensive and reliable treatment of the influence of Petrarch in France is the work published by Joseph Vianey early in the century.[70] In this volume the author considered not only the direct influence of Petrarch himself, but his indirect influence through the works of Serafino dell'Aquila, Chariteo, Tebaldeo, and especially Bembo and his disciples. Sections on Ronsard total some two score pages.

It is more than probable that Ronsard's debt to Petrarch is greater than his debt to all of the other Italian poets together. Vianey's volume testifies to the weight of this obligation, yet Vianey himself seems to have underestimated the true extent of Ronsard's borrowings from Petrarch: " . . . on ne peut guère compter dans les *Amours* [*de Cassandre*] plus d'une quarantaine de pièces . . . qui aient à proprement parler une source italienne précise" (p. 143).

This estimate must now be radically revised. The notes in Laumo-

[66] Ronsard was responding in kind to certain encomiastic verses addressed to him by Del Bene. These may be read in the Blanchemain ed. of Ronsard, II, 380-382, and IV, 359-360.

[67] See Addamiano, *Il Rinascimento in Francia*, pp. 522-523, for a partial list of Ronsard's sources, in which the name of Dante occurs four times.

[68] "A General Survey of Renaissance Petrarchism," *CL*, II (1950), 327-342. The influence of the *Canzoniere* in France is concisely summarized on pp. 334-336.

[69] See note 49 above. Calcaterra's contribution is in III, 167-213; the concluding section, "Cenni bibliografici per un avviamento negli studi sul Petrarca e sul petrarchismo," pp. 214-273, offers a highly condensed account, with frequent evaluations, of the present state of Petrarchan studies. Especially useful for the student of Petrarch's influence in France is the section "Sul petrarchismo in Francia" (pp. 264-266). Henri Hauvette's general study of *Les Poésies lyriques de Pétrarque* (Paris, 1931) contains a section on Petrarch's fortune in France, pp. 140-179.

[70] *Le Pétrarquisme en France au XVI^e siècle* (Montpellier, 1909).

nier's critical edition of Ronsard show that not fewer than ninety sonnets of these *Amours* have sources in Petrarch, that many of them have drawn upon more than one composition of Petrarch, and that, if one were to include all of the imitations of Italian poets that are to be found in the *Amours* for Cassandre, Vianey's estimate of Ronsard's obligations would be shown to be entirely inadequate. Besides, one of the principles of Vianey's investigation is seriously open to question: "D'abord nos poètes imitèrent non Pétrarque lui-même—quand un peuple s'engoue d'une littérature moderne se met-il à l'école d'écrivains morts depuis tant d'années?—mais les pétrarquistes italiens de leur temps . . . " (p. 7)—a position which Laumonier has doubly refuted.[71]

Ronsard's interest in the works of Petrarch continued into his maturer years, and indeed to the very end. One of the most powerful sonnets that Ronsard ever wrote, drawn alive from the heart of experience, was written on his death bed:

> Je n'ay plus que les os, un Schelette je semble,
> Decharné, denervé, demusclé, depoulpé . . .[72]

But, of a poet's experience, books are often the most intimate and permanent part. In his deepest descent into his own suffering, Ronsard found the line of Petrarch that had called his own sonnet into being:

> Infin ch'i mi disosso, e snervo, e spolpo . . . [73]

It is more than half a century since Marius Piéri wrote one of his theses on the influence of Petrarch on the Pléiade.[74] For a time this volume supplied a genuine want, but it had serious deficiencies in method and chronology, and has been rendered obsolete by the researches of Vianey, Laumonier, and Simone.[75] Professor Laumonier's contribution has not been limited to his careful documentation of the Petrarchan sources of Ronsard in the notes of his critical edition and his keen informative review of Vianey's work. In 1922 he demonstrated that Ronsard, even in the period preceding the *Odes*, had not needed the success of Du Bellay's *Olive* to induce him to try his hand

[71] In his review of Vianey, *RHL*, XVII (1910), 859-863, and in the notes of his critical edition of Ronsard.

[72] LL, VI, 6.

[73] This is the tenth line of the sonnet that begins "Di dì in dì vò cangiando il viso e'l pelo . . . " I quote from the Venice edition, 1579, *Il Petrarca con l'espositione di M. Alessandro Velutello*. Ronsard had once before employed the same passage, more than thirty years earlier (Laum., IV, 46, line 10). A comparison of the two treatments would not bring much comfort to those who persist in calling the dying Ronsard senile.

[74] *Pétrarque et Ronsard ou de l'influence de Pétrarque sur la Pléiade française* (Marseille, 1896).

[75] See notes 47 and 71 above.

at the Petrarchan style.[76] For the period immediately following that of the *Odes* there is an article by Léonce Marmay,[77] while Emile Faguet, in his lectures on the training of the Pléiade, discussed the influence of Petrarch on the works of the group, and especially on Ronsard.[78]

There is hardly a year in Ronsard's productive life from which the influence of Petrarch is completely absent. The time is ripe, and the way has been amply prepared by the researches to which we have just alluded, for a complete and penetrating monograph on Petrarch and Ronsard. A number of interesting themes would present themselves to the student who undertook this investigation. He might try to discover, through Ronsard's references to Petrarch and through the nature of his successive borrowings, the stages or vicissitudes of his evolution toward or away from Petrarch. In this connection, he would examine critically the assertion that has been made more than once that, in the sonnets for Hélène, Ronsard was a disciple of Desportes in his return to the Petrarchan style of composition.[79] He would seek to disclose the thoughts or sentiments of the earlier poet that had appealed most to the later. He would ask what qualities each of them had discovered at the summits of life and in the presence of death, particularly the death of one whom they had loved and sung. And in the case of these poets the student would be more than usually curious to ask the question whether Petrarch or Ronsard was the more successful in so identifying his life with his creative effort that the meaning of the one shone in the other.

Other Italian Influences. There does not appear to be any reference to Boccaccio in the works of Ronsard. There has been no study which brings the two into relation. Laumonier has observed[80] that Dorat and his pupils probably made use of Boccaccio's *De Gene-*

[76] "Ronsard poète pétrarquiste avant 1550," *Mélanges Lanson* (Paris, 1922) pp. 109-114.

[77] "L'Influence italienne au temps de Ronsard: Les imitations de Pétrarque et des poètes italiens dans le premier livre des Amours," *Bull. Historique et Scientifique de l'Auvergne*, XXIX (1909), 417-432, XXX (1910), 85-96. Cf. Benedetto Croce, "Ronsard: tre sonetti e un' ode," *La Critica*, Nov. 20, 1940.

[78] "Education littéraire des hommes de la Pléiade. I. L'Influence du Roman de la Rose et celle de Pétrarque," *Rev. des Cours et Conférences*, XXV (Ire Série, 1924), 289-305.

[79] So Jacques Lavaud in his edition of the *Sonnets pour Hélène* (Paris, 1947), Introduction, p. xix, who apparently follows Vianey, *Le Pétrarquisme*. The latter not only makes almost the same assertion ("Ronsard fut-il vraiment l'élève de Desportes dans ses *Sonnets pour Hélène*? C'est du moins fort probable" p. 256), but expresses the same reservations that Lavaud after him felt to be indispensable: "Le chantre d'Hélène fut-il donc un autre Desportes? Non, certes! On doit, au contraire, remarquer que jamais l'imitation de Ronsard ne fut moins servile qu'ici" (p. 261). Cf. my "Ronsard Studies," *BHR*, XII, 336.

[80] *Ronsard poète lyrique*, p. 380, note 1.

alogia Deorum, which may thus have influenced Ronsard's mythological education.

Ronsard became interested very early in the writings of Sannazaro, and in the *Arcadia* especially. The *Arcadia* had been translated into French in 1544 by Jean Martin, a personal friend of Ronsard, to whom the poet had addressed the thirteenth of the first book of *Odes*. Martin's translation is celebrated in the following lines:

> Le siecle qui doit estre
> Ne taira ton bon heur,
> Et comme tu fis naistre
> A la France un honneur:
> Toi, & dont la musette
> Et dont la vois doucette
> Chanta bien haut aussi
> Les beaus pasteurs qu'encore
> Naples autant honore
> Comme on t'honore ici.[81]

This ode dates from 1549, but there is some reason to believe that, as early as 1546, four years before the publication of his first major work, the *Odes* of 1550, Ronsard may already have come under the influence of Sannazaro.[82] But it was in 1559, with the writing of the "Chant Pastoral, à Madame Marguerite Duchesse de Savoye," that this influence began to be seriously felt.[83] There is another moment of increased interest in Sannazaro some years later when Ronsard, actively drawn into the service of the Court, was composing the *Elegies, Mascarades et Bergeries*.[84] There is no separate study devoted to Sannazaro and Ronsard. Vianey refers only to the influence of the Italian bucolic poet on Du Bellay, Baïf, and Magny.[85] There are several pages of discussion in the volume by Francesco Torracca on Sannazaro's fortune outside of Italy.[86] The Yale dissertation of A. T. MacAllister, Jr., on the literary relationship between Sannazaro and the Pléiade,[87] has not been published, as it ought to be. When it is, it would gain by deepened study and revision.

Ronsard knew well and admired the *Orlando Furioso*, although he expressed certain reservations on the degree of improbability that characterizes this epic.[88] No separate study seems to have been devoted to Ariosto and Ronsard.[89] Professor Alice Cameron, in her

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[81] Laum., I, 134 and note 2.
[82] Laum., II, 168 and note 2.
[83] Laum., IX, 174-192, and see the Introduction, IX, xix.
[84] They date from 1565 and occupy most of vol. XIII of the critical edition.
[85] *Le Pétrarquisme*, pp. 89-90, 163-164, 182-184.
[86] *Gl'imitatori stranieri di Jacopo Sannazaro* (Rome, 1882), pp. 58-70.
[87] "The Influence of Jacopo Sannazaro on the French Pléiade" (1938).
[88] LL, VII, 67.
[89] Limited bibliographical information may be obtained in the obsolescent volume of Giuseppe Jacopo Ferrazzi, *Bibliografia ariostesca* (Bassano, 1881),

work on the influence of Ariosto on the Pléiade,[90] has a chapter on Ronsard (pp. 1-93) which is without question the fullest existing treatment of the relationship between these poets. Miss Cameron's control of her materials is all that one could desire; but her presentation has no warmth or vivacity and, since this defect is intensified by her choice of a pedestrian chronological exposition, Pegasus walks through all the weary years. It is to Joseph Vianey that credit must go for initiating work in this field with his article on Ariosto and the Pléiade.[91] The second section of this article (pp. 300-306) discusses the influence of Ariosto in the epic writings of Ronsard ("Hymne de Calaïs et de Zethes," "Hymme de Pollux et de Castor," *La Franchiade*). Vianey's remarks turn very largely on two episodes of *La Franciade*, the duel between Francus and Phovère and the scene of the shipwreck. Amos Parducci was unable to accept Vianey's statement that the tempest is of Ariostean origin: "... l'episodio, nella sua trama generale, è ricalcato in tutto e per tutto sul racconto Virgiliano."[92] Nor does Parducci agree that the incident of the duel is entirely Ariostean in inspiration (pp. 11-12). Not long after his pioneering article, Vianey contributed another on Ronsard's "Exhortation pour la paix" and his polemical works,[93] and demonstrated a considerable debt to the *Orlando Furioso*. A new study, bringing together the contributions that have already been made, sometimes in unsuspected places,[94]

pp. 93-97, "L'Ariosto presso i Francesi." Sec. II ("Etudes") of the bibliography in the second volume (pp. 297-306) of Alexandre Cioranescu's *L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1939) will be found very useful; see also the many allusions to the influence of Ariosto on Ronsard in I, 41-45, 174-179, 208-212. The work of Henri Hauvette, *L'Arioste et la poésie chevaleresque à Ferrare au début du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1927) contains but one reference to Ronsard. The Munich dissertation of Berta Stirner, *Ariost und die französische Poesie der Renaissance* (Münster, 1931), is too slight a work (80 p.) for the period that it proposes to cover, although chap. III treats the interesting problem of "Ariost und die petrarkistische Poesie der Pléiade."

[90] *The Influence of Ariosto's Epic and Lyric Poetry on Ronsard and his Group* (Baltimore, 1930). The same author has written also on *The Influence of Ariosto's Epic and Lyric Poetry on the Work of Amadis Jamyn* (Baltimore, 1933), and there is a note by her on "Desportes and Ariosto: Additional Sources in the *Orlando* and the *Liriche*," *MLN*, L (1935), 174-178.

[91] "L'Arioste et la Pléiade," *Bull. Italien*, I (1904), 295-317. The substance of this article is included, with modifications, in the same writer's *Le Pétrarquisme en France* (see especially pp. 137-142).

[92] "Le imitazioni ariostee nella 'Franciade' del Ronsard," *Archivum Romanicum*, XIV (1930), p. 4 of the offprint.

[93] "L'Arioste et les Discours de Ronsard," *Rev. Universitaire*, I (1903), 473-475.

[94] Caroline Ruutz-Rees, "Some Debts of Samuel Daniel to Du Bellay," *MLN*, XXIV (1909), 134-137, has pointed out the similarity between the third sonnet of Ronsard's *Amours* of 1552, "Dans le serain de sa jumelle flamme," and Ariosto's sixth sonnet, "La rete fu di questa fila d'oro"; Ferdinando Neri, "La Nave di Ronsard," *Fanfulla della Domenica*, Mar. 19, 1916, p. 1-2, shows the influence of Ariosto upon Ronsard's "Ode à Michel de l'Hospital" and upon "Les Isles Fortunées." The same author has indicated in "Nota ai 'Regrets,'" *Athenaeum*,

and inquiring further into the literary association between the two poets, would by no means be superfluous, although not one of those most urgently needed.

Vianey published a note in 1900 on Ronsard's supposed debt to Luigi Alamanni for the metrical form of the Pindaric ode.[95] His belief in the reality of this debt was shared by Henri Hauvette in his thesis on Alamanni.[96] This position was masterfully analyzed by Paul Laumonier, and all of its shortcomings clearly exposed, in his review of Hauvette's dissertation.[97] He showed, among other things, the untenability of the artificial proposition that in the writing of his Pindaric odes Ronsard followed Alamanni for metrical form only, while imitating Pindar himself for substance; the likelihood that Ronsard had found in the sixteenth-century texts of Pindar, whose metrics no scholar of that time was in a position to understand, the typographical disposition in short lines that led him to adopt short verses for his Pindaric odes; and the probability that, if the relationship between the poets had been what Vianey and Hauvette asserted it to be, the name of Alamanni would have occurred somewhere in the writings of Ronsard, who was never reticent about his literary obligations. The reply made by Hauvette some score of years later[98] was not a serious answer to the difficulties raised by Laumonier.

There is difficulty in crediting the tradition that brings Ronsard and Tasso into not only literary but personal relations. Chandler B. Beall's summary of this question[99] discusses the origin of the tradition in the imagination of Giovan Battista Manso, the first biographer of Tasso, who, however, does not expressly name Ronsard; its maintenance through the writings of generations of biographers and scholars;

VII (1919), 185-193, the relationship between Sonnet 92 of Ronsard's *Amours* of 1552 ("Entre tes bras, impatient Roger") and a passage of the *Orlando Furioso*; this article may be found also in Neri's *Letteratura e leggende* (Turin, 1951).

[95] "Le modèle de Ronsard dans l'ode pindarique," *Rev. des Langues Romanes*, XLIII (1900), 433-436. The note on Ronsard and Alamanni occupies not quite two pages. Vianey devotes as much or more space to showing the debt of Du Bellay to Daniello for Sonnet 113 of the *Olive*, a much more successful demonstration.

[96] *Un Exilé florentin à la cour de France au XVI^e siècle: Luigi Alamanni (1495-1556), sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1903), pp. 452-454.

[97] "Luigi Alamanni: son influence sur la Pléiade française. A propos d'un livre récent," *Rev. de la Renaissance*, IV (1903), 258-274. See also the article by Louis Froger, "Ronsard et Alamanni," *Annales Fléchoises*, III (1904), 323-328, who shared Laumonier's skepticism concerning the validity of Hauvette's position.

[98] "Note sur Ronsard italianisant," *RLC*, IV (1924), 476-480.

[99] In *La Fortune du Tasse en France* (Eugene, Ore., 1942), pp. 2-3. The bibliography of the fortune of Tasso in France which, in 1942, was being prepared by Luigi Locatelli (see Beall, p. x), was never published; the materials for it are in the Biblioteca Civica of Bergamo (communication of Mr. Beall, Dec. 17, 1951). For a discussion of Tasso and the French epic one may consult Joseph Cottaz, *L'Influence des théories du Tasse sur l'épopée en France* (Paris, 1942). References to Ronsard will be found on pp. 36, 39, and 55.

and its refutation at the hands of Angelo Solerti[100] and more recently by Gabriel Maugain, who assigns to Pierantonio Serassi the responsibility for the creation of the Tasso-Ronsard legend.[101]

The recent dissertation by Bodo L. O. Richter on "The Place of Minor Italian Poets in the Works of Ronsard and Du Bellay" (University of Pennsylvania, 1951) throws light on a question that has never benefited from a thorough scrutiny. Dr. Richter defines his work as "an investigation of sources, and a study of how these sources were transformed." It had long been known, of course, that the *Rime diverse*, a Petrarchist, or rather Bembist, anthology in eight or nine volumes published by Giolito and others from 1545 to 1560, exercised a great influence on Ronsard and Du Bellay. Thanks to Richter's study, which devotes much space to the *Rime*, we are now in a position to evaluate that influence more precisely.[102] It is interesting to learn, for example, that both Du Bellay and Ronsard "wrote some of their best sonnets when they adhered most closely to the Italian original," and that a composite pattern of sources is exceptional in the *Olive* and common in the *Amours*.[103]

Early in the present century Eugène Parturier had found certain resemblances between compositions of Poliziano (e.g., "Stanze per la Giostra"), Lorenzo de' Medici ("Corinto"), and Ronsard ("Les Vers d'Eurymedon, et de Callirée," "Mignonne, allons voir . . ."). [104] But the similarities are strongest where the terms of comparison are the eternal commonplaces, however beautified, of the evanescent rose as a symbol of the ephemeral nature of all values, and least strong, in fact unconvincing, where the commonplaces are not so apparent.

Vianey has discussed the influence of several Italian writers of the Bernesque school on Ronsard, Du Bellay, and other members of the

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[100] *Vita di Torquato Tasso* (Rome, 1895), I, 144.

[101] "Les prétendues relations du Tasse et de Ronsard," *RLC*, IV (1942), 429-442. Maugain, however, in *Ronsard en Italie*, p. 137, note 4, is inclined to see the influence of Ronsard in the *Aminta* of Tasso. The article by A. Dupré, "Relations du Tasse avec Ronsard," *Bull. de la Soc. Archéologique, Scientifique et Littéraire du Vendômois*, XIII (1874), 21-33, is, as one might expect, still respectful of Manso as a "texte plein d'autorité" (p. 22), and accepts Serassi without question.

[102] See also the recent article by Raymond Lebègue, "Un Volume de vers italiens annotés par Ronsard," *Bull. du Bibliophile* (1951), no. 6, pp. 273-280, which analyzes the marginalia by Ronsard in the poet's copy of the *Rime*. On Feb. 21, 1952, Richter read before the Romance Club of the University of Pennsylvania a paper on "Ronsard as a Reader of Petrarchan Poetry," which is also based on the marginalia in the *Rime*. The discussions by Lebègue and Richter complement each other.

[103] My references are to passages in the conclusion of the typescript of Richter's thesis, pp. 265-272. For the influence of Bembo on Ronsard and the Pléiade see, in addition, the article by E. H. Wilkins referred to in note 68 above, pp. 334-335.

[104] "Quelques sources italiennes de Ronsard au XV^e^ siècle (Politien et Laurent de Médicis)," *Rev. de la Renaissance*, VI (1905), 1-21.

Pléiade.[105] On the debt of Ronsard to the Italian theorists of the epic, one may consult the series of articles published by R. C. Williams two decades ago.[106]

Ronsard and Provence

Among the letters of Estienne Pasquier there is one to Ronsard containing a passage that concerns our subject closely:

> . . . depuis le temps de Philippe Auguste jusques bien avant dans le regne de Louys neufiesme . . . florirent assez heureusement les bonnes lettres: & par especial y eut une grande flotte de Poëtes François (c'est ce dont vous m'escrivez.) A quoy mesmes les Princes de France voulurent estre les premiers guides du commun peuple. Entre autres l'on fait estat du Comte Beranger de Provence, & d'un Raymond Comte de Tholose, qui furent environ le regne du mesme Auguste en l'an mil deux cens que plus que moins. Ces deux-cy, & leurs courtizans en faveur d'eux donnerent tel advancement à nostre Poësie, que les Italiens (ores qu'entre autres choses, sobres admirateurs d'autruy) sont contraints de recognoistre ne tenir en foy & hommage leur Poësie que de nous. Ainsi le recognoist Bembe dans ses Proses, ainsi Speron Speron en son Dialogue des langues, ainsi Aequicola en ses livres de l'amour, & ainsi à peu parler le voit-on à l'œil dans les œuvres de Dante, lequel embellist une partie de ses escrits de plusieurs traits, mipartis tant du Provençal que François.[107]

The remainder of the letter is of equal interest. It reveals Pasquier in the act of imparting to Ronsard much information, with examples "habillez à la vieille Françoise," concerning the poetry of Provence, information to which he could not have been indifferent: " . . . je m'asseure qu'y trouverez plusieurs traits dont nous pourrions aujourd'huy faire nostre profit, & qui est une chose que je vous veux icy dire par excellence, c'est que sur chaque premier couplet y est la Musique ancienne" (fol. 61 v°).

To judge, somewhat riskily no doubt, from the almost total absence of critical discussions of Ronsard and the poets of Provence, he did not avail himself of the opportunity, so richly motivated by Pasquier, to study at first hand the poetry of southern France. This, indeed,

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[105] "Bruscambille et les poètes bernesques," *RHL*, VII (1901), 569-576; see especially the first two pages.

[106] "Italian Influence on Ronsard's Theory of the Epic," *MLN*, XXXV (1920), 161-165, in which some of Ronsard's statements are compared with those of Minturno, Daniello, Giraldi Cinzio, and Benedetto Varchi; "The Originality of Daniello," *Romanic Rev.*, XV (1924), 121-122, which discusses Daniello's influence in establishing the position that the proper subjects for epic poetry are wars and the deeds of kings and leaders of men, a position in which Ronsard and J. C. Scaliger concurred; "Verisimilitude in the Epic," *MP*, XXII (1924-25), 133-151, a discussion of the opinions of French and Italian critics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These and a number of other articles of a similar nature by Williams were outgrowths or extensions of his Johns Hopkins dissertation (1917) on "The Theory of the Heroic Epic in Italian Criticism of the Sixteenth Century."

[107] *Les Lettres d'Estienne Pasquier, Conseiller et Advocat general du Roy en la Chambre des Comptes de Paris.* En Avignon, par Jacques Bramereau, M.D.XC., fo. 58r°-58v°.

is the opinion of Raymond Lebègue: "Si Ronsard a traité certains sujets chers à nos premiers poètes lyriques, il semble, jusqu'à preuve du contraire, qu'il ne les a connus que par les Italiens, disciples de notre poésie 'provençale,' ou bien par la chanson populaire française . . . "[108] The only study of which I know that seeks to bring Ronsard into direct relationship with one of the troubadours is that of Professor A. H. Schutz, "Ronsard's 'Amours XXXII' and the Tradition of the Synthetic Lady."[109] The sonnet in question, "Quand au premier la Dame que j'adore," shows the gods making characteristic gifts to Cassandre at the behest of Zeus. Discussing this article in "Ronsard Studies,"[110] I observed that Mr. Schutz, not entirely satisfied with Laumonier's note that "Tout le sonnet s'inspire d'Hésiode,"[111] had suggested the possibility that Ronsard might have known such a poem as the "Domna soisseubuda" of Bertran de Born; but that there was no choice for the impartial student except to continue to regard Laumonier's source as the probable one, since the composition by Bertran de Born lacked any reference to the matter of Ronsard's sonnet.

In a communication brimful of scholarly zest, Mr. Schutz amends my impression of the purpose of his article and opens a valuable new perspective in the field covered by the present essay:

> I don't know that I made myself altogether clear in the article on the synthetic lady. There is no doubt Ronsard knew Hesiod and that he used him even for this poem. Where I cannot agree with Laumonier is when he says that the *whole* poem is due to Hesiod . . . Ronsard was a vigorous poet with national, even nationalistic ideas. He liked and even drew on sources from the national past, *vide* J. Lemaire and his trusty Trojans . . . Even in the Marie cycle, which is said to be Petrarchesque (and is, for that matter), one could set up a whole parcel of *pastourelle* conventions and make a fair case for Ronsard having been aware of them . . . He used his national stuff and took delight in it. He felt, on the other hand, that . . . it had to be presentable in classical or Italianate terms, or, in other words . . . "ennobled" by Greco-Roman trimmings. In sonnet XXXII he takes a *blason-domna soisseubuda* tradition of old currency, gives it a good varnish of Hesiod, and there you are![112]

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[108] *Ronsard, l'homme et l'œuvre*, p. 152. This coincides with the opinion expressed more than once by Laumonier. The three pages of Provençal bibliography in Baldensperger and Friederich's *Bibliography of Comparative Literature*, pp. 391-393, contain little to our purpose.

[109] *Romance Philology*, I (1947), 125-135.

[110] *BHR*, XII (1950), 336-337.

[111] Laum., IV, 35, note 3.

[112] Communication of Mr. Schutz of May 4, 1951. The present essay was read in part before the French II Group of the Modern Language Association in Detroit, Dec. 29, 1951. The sections dealing with Ronsard's relations with Italian literature owe an immense debt for bibliographical assistance to Dr. Bodo L. O. Richter of the University of Pennsylvania. Information supplied by Professors Raymond Lebègue of the Sorbonne and Morris Bishop of Cornell University has also been most helpful.

BOOK REVIEWS

THOMAS WOLFE, LA FRANCE ET LES ROMANCIERS FRANÇAIS. By Daniel L. Delakas. Paris: Jouve et Cie., 1950. xii, 155 p.

From one point of view one might regret the lack of relationship between Thomas Wolfe, France, and its novelists. For the ties are fragile, as Mr. Delakas acknowledges at many points. Wolfe's seven flights abroad, which included brief stays in France, were made to avoid domestic entanglements and the better to view America. This important American novelist had his own reasons for observing France a little less searchingly, a little less disinterestedly than most callers for mail in the rue Scribe; but that did not keep his impressions of Paris from being a shade less profound, evidence of a mind a little less open to things Gallic, than theirs.

The lack of common ground between Wolfe and France is undoubtedly reflected also in a lack of common ground with its novelists. One of the marks of Wolfe's peculiar accomplishment was the staunchness of his resistance to lessons which most of his contemporaries learned too easily from France. No doubt he was in search of lost time; he was so relentlessly bent on dredging up the past that his recollections have none of the freshness, the self-determination of Proust's. Wolfe did not remember "involuntarily." He never, in an important sense, forgot in the first place. Those passages in which he professes, apropos of a given sensation, to recover the past intact and whole, obtrude as awkwardly in his narratives as those in which he apes Joycean techniques. And in spite of Mr. Delakas' efforts one can find little in common between the last hours of Ben and of Marcel's grandmother beyond the fact that both scenes are unforgettable. Wolfe learned something about portraying monomania from Balzac; and he was capable of being caught up by Balzac's wonderfully filled-out paragraphs and, for a page or two, of doing likewise. It serves little purpose, however, to say, as Mr. Delakas does, that "on peut interpréter les romans de Wolfe comme une sorte de *Comédie Humaine* dont l'auteur serait le personnage principal," even with the qualifications that are made on a later page (p. 109), since such a *Comédie Humaine* is unthinkable. There was more than temperamental resemblance between Wolfe and Rabelais, and perhaps Mr. Delakas will pursue this question further, making some distinctions between French writers which he does not make here.

The climate Wolfe found congenial was the Germany of the 1930s, where his first two novels were promptly translated and enthusiastically received. (Mr. Delakas regrets that no French translation of any Wolfe novel was available in Paris before 1947.) A German public prepared by Expressionism did honor to his mythopoeic powers, did not mind his *bavures*. And so insistent is the whole question of temperament in Wolfe's case, where spirit speaks or fails to speak to spirit, that it was only in Germany at first that thoughtful readers could see through his confusions to his substantial merits.

It is a question, however, whether Mr. Delakas' study is less rewarding than that unwritten and potentially so interesting book on Wolfe and Germany ought to be. Bringing such dissimilar writers as Wolfe and Balzac, Wolfe and Proust, together has the effect of demonstrating the uniqueness of all concerned—better, probably, than work on Dos Passos and France, on Wescott or Hemingway and France, would do. Mr. Delakas was able to write this study because he had once fallen under the sway of a powerful American writer, and his book, with its sympathetic and helpful comment, its filling-in of gaps in our knowledge, its

well-chosen quotations, brings the works of the novelist before us in all their disturbing amplitude. The breadth is in the fabric of Wolfe's prose:

"The heir apparent [Eugene Gant] had, as a matter of fact, made his début completely equipped with all appurtenances, dependences, screws, cocks, faucets, eyes, nails considered necessary for completeness of appearance, harmony of parts and unity of effect in this most energetic, driving, and competitive world. He was the complete male in miniature, the tiny acorn from which the mighty oak must grow, the heir of all the ages, the inheritor of unfulfilled renown, the child of progress, the darling of the budding Golden Age, and what's more, Fortune and all her Fairies, not content with well-nigh smothering him with these blessings of time and family, saved him up carefully until Progress was rotten-ripe with glory."

Such a passage at such a point in *Look Homeward, Angel* is no mere exercise. It reflects the author's search for a style commensurate with all he had sought, indiscriminately, to absorb. It is clearly a nonclassical style, a vital part of Behemoth, the Wolfian novel that ran head-on into the neat, conventional *romancrise* of the epoch—and no wonder that the crash was so resounding. And from a study of that style and the form of the Wolfian novel one could proceed logically to a parallel between Wolfe and certain writers, if not novelists, of the sixteenth century. Like Rabelais and others, Wolfe labored out of singularly inhuman circumstances toward a remarkably humane vision of the world.

Yet one can understand why Daniel Delakas and Alfred Kazin throw the emphasis on the content of this novel rather than its form, and place Wolfe in a "school of agony." (Though why Faulkner and Henry Miller are also there I cannot see.) What Wolfe had to say was something so harsh and painful that it has rarely been brought up to the level of expression at all. Among other writers I can think only of Vardis Fisher who has faced the plight of the adolescent in primitive America with as little self-deceit. Fisher has been as untrue to himself in later works as Wolfe was threatening to become at the time of his death; but in four early ones, the tetralogy beginning with *In Tragic Life*, he told in a comparable way a story comparable to Wolfe's. Neither Wolfe nor Fisher wrote tragedies, but they did tell of tragic lives, lives wherein, among the remnants of religions providing a sense of predestination and issueless guilt, passions spin the plot. The kind of stories these men had to relate, set in scenes daubed with the "dry, caked colors of America," as Wolfe described them, cannot be regarded with equanimity. Fisher frequently lapsed into that desiccation of style which seems to be the commonest lot of those who grapple with American experience as it is. (Witness, more recently, Carson McCullers.) The reaction of Wolfe, temperamentally so different, was to launch into those lyrical overexpansions of emotion which make his novels so hard to read. He wearies us almost to death with his dragging-in of the word "lost." He tells us, as though they were ideas rather than feelings, all the details of his responses to the great writers. All his riding off in a dozen directions at once, his overstatement, his desperate intellectual pride, stem from intolerable awareness of the predicament of the Gants and people like them, people who will go on devising new self-punishments for the guilt they cannot escape. Eliza spins out her greed until it destroys Ben as well as Grover—Ben having first accumulated bitterness on paralyzing bitterness—and then spoils Eugene (or George Webber), keeping him flailing about for years in the European scenes which did him no good whatever. The hugely inarticulate elder Gant founders in his excesses. The just, the promising, are crushed with a kind of maniacal spite which is, indeed, reminiscent of Balzac. And there is no solution, no way out for these characters

controlled by dismal circumstances and a tragic flaw (that stain in the blood which Eugene resents so terribly) until the machine plays itself out.

And this is the "America" we are obliged to think of along with "France," the America that Wolfe ran away from, as who would have failed to, having seen it so clearly, but also turned and confronted magnificently. It is to Daniel Delakas' credit that he felt the power of Wolfe, the whole man, with his flaws and virtues, and sought to show his connections with the country where the novelist is now finding the footing he missed during his lifetime.

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L'AVENTURE DE L'HUMANISME EUROPÉEN AU MOYEN-ÂGE (IV^e^-XIV^e^ SIÈCLE). By Paul Renucci. Paris: Société d'édition Les Belles Lettres, 1953. 266 p. (Les Classiques de l'Humanisme.)

As a synthetic condensation, this book is a remarkable achievement. On its 114 pages of text (the rest contains notes, bibliography, indexes, etc.) it covers eleven centuries of European evolution; and, to those at least who agree with its general approach, it presents a clear, well organized, and vivid description of what happened to the mind of Europeans during this long period.

In the preface (p. 9) the author defines humanism, for his purpose, as "la reconquête du patrimoine philosophique, littéraire et scientifique des Anciens." He is convinced that this inheritance had been entirely lost; he tacitly implies that there were no new constructive trends or tendencies; Boethius' work, for instance, appears exclusively as a defiguration of ancient philosophy, and all the phenomena of mediaeval civilization are evaluated according to the degree of their conscious effort to reconquer the authentic treasures of antiquity. The aspects of mediaeval civilization which were relatively new and independent, and those new forms which were inextricably fused with ancient elements, are explicitly or implicitly condemned; the great movements which first mobilized the conscience of Europeans—the monastic reforms, the Investiture conflict, etc.—are neglected, and obviously not only because they do not fall within the scope of the book. Humanism is the victorious athlete who alone, in an adventurous course, reconquers truth and beauty against dogmatism, ignorance, and "mystical interpretations." (It is Fulgentius who is considered as the ancestor of mystical interpretation.)

This old conception of humanism as enlightenment through classical civilization is very substantially modernized by the inclusion of scholasticism. Humanism now begins around 1150, about three centures earlier than in the corresponding theories of the nineteenth century. The reception of Aristotelianism becomes the first, even the most important, phase of humanism, the first Hellenization, the liberation of the intellect. The scholastics—not only men such as Abelard or Siger of Brabant, but, e.g., Hildebert of Lavardin, Adelhard of Bath, the Chartrians—are presented as more or less revolutionary, nonconformist humanistic minds, and the reader finds rather frequently sentences such as the following: "A Paris où la théologie reste encore, malgré Bérenger de Tours, la fin de toute science . . . "(p. 59); or, with regard to Adelhard of Bath's opinion on the identity of the will of the Creator with reason: "on pense malgré soi à l'irrévérencieuse formule de Nietzsche, 'Dieu bouche-trou'" (p. 62). Very surprisingly, Lupus of Ferrières becomes the ancestor of this spirit of humanistic criticism; he "clashes strongly" ("tranche vigoureusement") with the other Carolingian scholars ("ces pédants satisfaits," p. 29).

The best parts of the book are those dealing with the development of Aristotelianism in France and later in Italy; they are full of interesting information, and well organized. It seems to me, however, that, while describing with great vigor the initial conflict between Arabic Aristotelianism and Christian dogma, the author does not see what Aristotle had to offer to Christian theology; without a kind of pre-established harmony between the two traditions, Thomas Aquinas would never have succeeded in his work. On p. 97 the author says that Aristotelianism practically ignored the existence of the particular: "il roulait non sur l'individu mais sur l'espèce, non sur l'objet mais sur la forme." That may be not entirely wrong, but sounds rather superficial coming from an author who reads Dante and knows the Aristotelian meaning of form. The interesting résumés of the classical subjects in French vernacular literature are spoiled by the author's lack of understanding of Christian symbolism and the Christian approach to history—one may even say, by his lack of historical understanding in general. On p. 73, he defends the classical culture of the epic poets against those who find it superficial because Hector and other ancient heroes are presented as mediaeval knights. He says that this argument ("qui sent son romantisme d'une lieue") is nothing but a reproach of the poets of the twelfth century for their lack of *couleur locale*—that the "rule" of *couleur locale* had been "stipulated" in the nineteenth century and that Racine had not observed it either. I certainly agree with Mr. Renucci that the historical approach of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is far from being superficial; yet it differed somewhat from that of Racine; and what was "stipulated" around 1800 was something more than the rule of *couleur locale*. The third chapter, called "La translatio studii et le changement de cap de l'humanisme européen," is devoted to the Aristotelian (i.e., Parisian) and other French influences in early Italian humanism; it also deals more generally with mediaeval elements surviving in the Italian movement, and with its shift of emphasis from metaphysics to aesthetics. I have read this chapter with great interest. Yet, in spite of the author's protestations against nationalism in scholarly work, his enumeration of every little bit of material French influence sounds all too intentional. Moreover, the Aristotelianism of the Stil Nuovo (before Cavalcanti and Dante) needs more thorough substantiation (p. 153); and this applies also to certain assertions concerning Italian artists on pp. 150-151. On the other hand, when (p. 161) some Italian chroniclers are praised for having described at least their own time without visions and fables, the same could be said for many earlier writers, from Eginhard to Villehardouin.

I do not agree with the author's general approach. But, after all, this approach (revival of ancient civilization as enlightenment against early mediaeval ignorance), if it is not the way to an understanding of mediaeval civilization, still contains a good deal of common sense, and is a good frame for collecting and presenting important information. Scholars with such a large horizon and such a gift for synthesis as Mr. Renucci are becoming increasingly rare. I therefore would willingly recommend his book, if its documentation, in spite of the abundance of quotations and bibliographical material, were not so unreliable.

The description of the first centuries (up to the early twelfth) is almost entirely based on authorities such as Ampère, Celesia, Comparetti, Ebert, Egger, Graf, Hauréau, etc., whose books were written in the second part of the nineteenth century. The leading modern writers on the early mediaeval period, such as H. F. Muller, Laistner, de Ghellinck, etc., are not even cited in the bibliography. Unbelievable as it sounds, the work of Ernst Robert Curtius seems to be entirely unknown to Mr. Renucci. For the later period, documentation is much more adequate, in spite of some strange mistakes and omissions.

Now, the author accepts the opinions, evaluations, and information given by nineteenth-century compilers very often without control; and sometimes, using modern and more reliable sources, he attributes to them opinions which they did not express. I have collected and checked, in half a day's work, six examples which show the consequences of such a practice. But, since each of them requires much space to be clearly explained, I may be allowed to present only two.

On p. 56 the author attributes to Hildebert of Lavardin, on the authority of Ampère (3rd ed., 1870) the assertion that science is superior to faith. Ampère quotes (incompletely) a sentence from a *Tractatus theologicus*, printed in Migne, CLXXI, 1067 ff., among the works of Hildebert. Mr. Renucci could have found in any theological encyclopaedia that the *Tractatus* is not a work of Hildebert (for more detailed information see A. Wilmart in *Revue bénédictine*, XLV, 163). Moreover (and this seems to me much worse), he did not look up the passage in Migne (*loc. cit.*, 1069). It runs as follows: "(Fides est) supra opinionem, quia plus est credere quam opinari; infra scientiam, quia minus est credere quam scire. Ideo credimus ut aliquando sciamus." Thus *scientia* does not mean something like modern "science," but the direct knowledge of God which the blessed possess.

On p. 152, the author attributes to Grabmann (*Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, II, 240 ff.) the opinion ("irréconciliable avec le fait que...") that Averroism first appeared in the centers of Padua and Bologna around 1320-25. From the following rhetorical questions (an apparently indispensable ingredient of French scholarly rhetoric, particularly dear to Mr. Renucci) an uninformed reader could draw the conclusion that Grabmann did not know of any vestiges of Averroism in Italy before that date and ignored or negiected Dante's passage on Siger of Brabant. Now Grabmann's cautious and fundamental study on Taddeo of Parma and the earliest methodical representatives of Averroism in Italian universities cannot be summed up in such a way; he discusses the Dante passages in question, he knows and mentions Taddeo d'Alderotto, and his very intention is to explore vestiges of early Averroistic teaching with which Dante's allusions might be connected. The author himself, before starting his interesting discussions of Averroism at the court of Frederick II ("sous une forme pour ainsi dire brute") and the connections between Ghibellins and Averroists, has to confess: "Il est possible que l'averroïsme n'ait été enseigné *ex cathedra* et de façon dogmatique qu'au début du XIVe siècle, mais cela ne veut pas dire qu'il fût inconnu auparavant." Certainly not, but Grabmann never said it.

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THE MIRROR AND THE LAMP: ROMANTIC THEORY AND CRITICAL TRADITION. By M. H. Abrams. New York: Oxford University Press, 1953. xiii, 460 p.

Mr. Abrams has written a remarkable booklet on the history of criticism, the most distinguished contribution of American scholarship in that field since the work of J. E. Spingarn. The book describes the change from the critical theories of neoclassicism to romantic criticism, analyzes the body of early nineteenth-century theories, and concludes with a vista into the later nineteenth century. The focus is on English criticism; the hero (if there is one) seems to be Coleridge. Wordsworth, Hazlitt, the English "preromantic" critics, and many minor figures of the early nineteenth century are given special attention. Mr. Abrams provides the best discussion I know of the theories on poetic diction propounded

by Wordsworth and Coleridge; he seems the first to bring out the true position in the history of ideas of Keble's *Lectures on Poetry* and of Mill's early essays; he has even made a little discovery, a curious article, "The Philosophy of Poetry" (1835) by one Alexander Smith, which strikingly anticipates some of the ideas of I. A. Richards.

Mr. Abrams has, however, understood that the history of English criticism cannot be treated in isolation. He has provided sufficient background in the history of early thought, referring constantly to sources in classical antiquity, to Aristotle, Horace, Longinus, Quintilian, and others and to the French and Italian theorists of the preceding centuries. He knows also that the center of many of the changes he discusses was in Germany, and uses his knowledge of Herder, Goethe, Schiller, Schelling, and the Schlegels to document earlier or parallel developments with great advantage. The meticulous documentation which draws frequently on very minor and obscure authors, the lucid, fluent exposition, the skill in marshalling details, the power of analysis deserve high praise.

The method is that of the "history of ideas." Mr. Abrams traces key concepts such as imitation, invention, genius, and organism through many texts, occasionally stopping to analyze a more extended argument. He gives the method a peculiar twist, however, by emphasizing the basic metaphorical analogies in criticism. The title of the book suggests this central theme, a contrast between "two common and antithetic metaphors of the mind, one comparing the mind to a reflector of external objects, the other to a radiant projector which makes a contribution to the objects it perceives" (p. vii). But the epigraph, drawn from a poem by Yeats asking "the mirror to turn lamp," does not do full justice to the body of Mr. Abrams' argument. I would even suggest that, in the light of the book itself, the title is something of a misnomer. The change was not from the root metaphor of a mirror to that of a lamp; it was rather, as Mr. Abrams himself shows, a replacement of mechanical analogies by biological ones. The "plant" and the "organism," "creation" in the sense of procreation, expelled the older comparisons with making and contriving, mirroring and reflecting. But even this change must not be considered universal and completely consistent. The German romanticists made much of the "creative mirror" and Wordsworth and Coleridge resorted to mechanical analogies for poetic unity whenever they thought fit. Wordsworth, e.g., says, speaking of the sonnet, that he has been "in the habit of preferring the image of an orbicular body,—a sphere, or a dewdrop" (Wordsworth's *Literary Criticism*, ed. Smith, p. 247); and Coleridge describes the totality of a work of literary art by the act of converting "those events which in real or imagined history move in a straight line" into a "circular motion" (*Unpublished Letters*, ed. E. L. Griggs, II, 128). While the metaphor of the "fountain," the "overflow of feeling," appears first in the romantic age, Mr. Abrams himself shows that the demand for sincerity has its root in ancient rhetorical theory and could constantly appeal to Horace's lines:

> "Si vis me flere, dolendum est
> Primum ipsi tibi."

The contrasts are less sharp than we sometimes imagine if we think only of extreme statements. Metaphorical analogies were not always consistently borne in mind or carried out with any recognition of their exclusions or implications. Mr. Abrams, one should emphasize, has not succumbed to the temptation of his insight; he has stated and described the analogies but has not neglected other problems which are not accessible by this method. The book is a general book about critical theory, not merely the exposition of a thesis on the root metaphors.

The book can be criticized only by pointing to certain limitations of its method

and a certain obscurity in the final position of the author. The history-of-ideas approach, with its reliance on the tracing of "unit-ideas," prevents Mr. Abrams from discussing a single critic's work as a whole and hence from defining the critical creed of any individual in all its complexity. This is the price the method must pay for its virtues. It works thus best with a body of rather unindividualized materials and least successfully with a multifarious, contradictory, individualistic, and even idiosyncratic author, such as Coleridge.

Though Mr. Abrams frequently refers to Coleridge's German models, he consistently overrates his originality and novelty and thus, to my mind, distorts the general history of romantic criticism in Europe. Mr. Abrams, e.g., often refers to Coleridge's essay "On Poesy and Art" as if it were a central document in Coleridge's thought. It must, however, be described as a mere paraphrase, with a few pious interpolations, of Schelling's oration "Über das Verhältniß der bildenden Kunst zur Natur" (1807). The fact of the relation is known to Mr. Abrams, as it is to all students since De Quincey discovered the resemblance. But Mr. Abrams does not draw the consequences from the overwhelming evidence for Coleridge's borrowings from the Germans. He refers vaguely to the fact that "Coleridge has been charged with a penchant for appropriating passages from German philosophers" (p. 170). But the charge has been proved to the hilt by many investigators. To say, on the same page, that the *Theory of Life* "incorporates various concepts from German *Natur-Philosophen*" ignores the evidence assembled by Henri Nidecker (in *Bericht der philosophisch-historischen Fakultät der Universität Basel*, 5. Heft, Basel, 1927) that the essay is nothing but a patchwork of quotations from Schelling and Steffens. To speak of the "inner sense" as Coleridge's term (p. 151) ignores Kant's frequent usage. To consider the contrast between subjective and objective poetry as Coleridge's (p. 242) neglects the fact that the very same distinction was drawn by Schiller and both Schlegels and in reference to the ancients and moderns. To see Coleridge's "self-evolving seed-ideas" (p. 283) as an advance on the static ideas of Bodmer and Breitinger ignores the fact that Coleridge merely adopts Schelling's dynamic conceptions, while the old Swiss critics were still Leibnitzians. Even Coleridge's striking phrase for illusion, "the willing suspension of disbelief" (cf. p. 324), merely formulates the psychology of illusion expounded by Moses Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn describes "eine gewisse Fertigkeit sich der Täuschung zu überlassen" and speaks of our capacity to transcend unreality through abstraction—"wir abstrahieren vorsätzlich von dem Nichtwirklichsein." (See "Rhapsodie oder Zusätze zu den Briefen über die Empfindungen" [1761] and *Morgenstunden* [1786], Section II of part called "Über Wahrheit, Schein, Irrtum".) Mr. Abrams is also unduly impressed by an old essay of A. O. Lovejoy which argued that Kant was anticipated by the Cambridge Platonists, and that Coleridge is hence correct in claiming independence from the Germans (p. 346). But surely Kant's teaching would be trite and commonplace if he had merely taught that not all our knowledge comes from experience, and if it were, to any extent, similar to that of the Cambridge Platonists. Coleridge draws on the Germans, not merely in a general way, but by using their terminology and by paraphrasing, frequently word for word, their formulas and reproducing even whole essays and chapters. All this may need some rearguing; but the conclusion that Coleridge, in criticism, "had no peer among the German organic theorists" (p. 170) is surely extravagant, if the list of Germans includes, as it presumably does, such great critics as the two Schlegels.

Mr. Abrams' method has one further limitation; he pays no attention to social causes and backgrounds. This is, I think, a necessity, given his topic, but it obscures for him the rise of a whole important critical movement. Nothing at

all is said about the emerging realism and naturalism of the nineteenth century, the increasing attention to the social background and import of literature, the study of social types and relations. The nineteenth century in its later stages cannot be adequately understood in terms of Mr. Abrams' concepts.

The detachment with which he tells his story, the lack of any commitment even as to the value and relevance of his root metaphors, suggests an ideal of neutral objectivity commonly held nowadays. Only very rarely does one sense his discontent with the pedantries of neoclassicism or the excesses of romantic emotionalism. At times he makes critical remarks on contemporary figures such as Cleanth Brooks, but his own point of view remains ultimately obscure. One can only hope that Mr. Abrams will rethink the problem of metaphorical analogies, outside a specific historical context, and will arrive at a theory of criticism which will relate these metaphors to a philosophy of language and symbolism. His book is a superb piece of historical research and exposition; it misses its chance of being a contribution to literary theory through its history.

R. W.

CARLYLE'S UNFINISHED HISTORY OF GERMAN LITERATURE. Edited by Hill Shine. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1951. xxxvi, 156 p.

This modest volume, varityped and lithoprinted, represents a small but nevertheless real contribution to our understanding of Carlyle and a portion of his age. Professor Shine has edited with admirable thoroughness an all but forgotten fragment of Carlyle's early work, which exists only in manuscript at the Yale University Library and in a typescript copy at Harvard. The manuscript is a fragment of a fragment; for, after stopping work in the middle of his *History of German Literature*, Carlyle rescued parts of it for three articles which he sold to the periodicals. Some of the pages he recopied, making minor changes to suit the new purpose; others he removed altogether. The Yale manuscript, then, contains six chapters, one of them incomplete, on ninety sheets numbered 1 to 68 and 89 to 110. In his introduction the editor provides a hypothetical reconstruction of the work, from the manuscript and the three articles, as it must have been when Carlyle stopped work on it.

As an informative treatise on German literature, the fragment has lost whatever value it might once, if only potentially, have had; but, because Carlyle was not given to leaving his works unfinished, something like a special interest attaches to it, as to that other forgotten fragment, *Wotten Reinfred*. *Wotton* died in 1827 because Carlyle found that he simply could not write the things a novelist had to write, however much Goethe's example and Jane's enthusiasm urged him on. For reasons not wholly clear the *History of German Literature*, begun early in 1830, was discontinued in July of the same year, less than half done. Shine cites the sudden collapse of publication arrangements—with the introduction of the Reform Bill and the threat of a general election no publisher would take the risk, and, in addition, British interest in German literature had been for some time on the wane. Reasons enough, perhaps. But why, then, did not *Sartor Resartus* die in manuscript when a year later London publishers gave it an even more discouraging rejection? With Carlyle, failure to find a publisher might be a deterrent but it was no preventive to the completion of a work which he felt compelled to write. We know from entries in his *Two Notebooks* that there was no compulsion, save a financial one, behind this *History*, which he regarded as little better than hackwork, "a trivial insignificant Book, do what I can . . . Were I done with this, I will endeavour to *compile* no more."

More important than his distaste for compilation was the burgeoning in his mind, as a result of his German reading, of that eclectic transcendentalism which explained for him the profound spiritual meaning of man and society, and which was at last to furnish a release for his longing to write an original work. As early as March 1830 his pen had run away with him when he had found himself writing "a most tremendous speculation on *History,*" intended for an introduction to the German work but so unsuited to it that he published the essay separately in *Fraser's Magazine*. In September he began the writing of *Sartor*. Carlyle was apparently content to stop further work on the *History* when prospects of publishing it grew dim, though he still nourished a hope of utilizing in some way what he had done.

Nevertheless, with this as with all his works Carlyle wrote as well as he knew how. Shine emphasizes, I think overemphasizes, Carlyle's scholarly inadequacies. Thorough and systematic investigation in the field of German literature was scarcely possible at that time, though if he had wished he could have been more thorough and systematic than he was. What Carlyle lacked in this respect he made up in sympathetic insight and a talent for getting the most out of the source materials he could collect while at Craigenputtock. On the basis of the torso, it seems likely that, if he had completed the four volumes of the work as originally planned, it would have stood in its day as a competent introduction to its subject. This was all Carlyle intended it to be, a preliminary and temporary treatment, for the uninformed. His method, though not scholarly, was sound. Wherever possible he fixed his attention on specific literary works and authors. His account of these is shrewd, critical, or sympathetic, according to their deserts. Where literary remains are few and poorly understood, he confesses his ignorance. His treatment of works like the *Heldenbuch* and the *Nibelungen Lied* is exposition and romantic criticism. He preferred, as his age preferred, the genuinely primitive to the artificially cultured. As a literary historian he tried to assume, as he said, the character of a witness "set there to report and intelligibly represent the things visible, as they successively or simultaneously emerge; but for the primary causes and grand moving agencies, to consider these as a mighty sea, some of whose tides and surface currents it were indeed blindness not to note; but whose interior secrets, in their bottomless depths, defy all sounding." This statement reveals both the scope and the limitations of Carlyle's historical method, and points clearly ahead to the kind of history he was to write in the *French Revolution,* where to the character of a witness he was to add features of a judge.

The real value of this unfinished *History of German Literature,* then, lies in what it tells us about one stage in the development of Carlyle's thought. In 1830, aged 35, he had "almost finished with the Germans," with their help had "got rid of Materialism," and, exultant with his attainment, after such long struggle, of a satisfactory and coherent view of things, he was fairly bursting to produce an original work in which he could teach this view to others. No wonder the *History* was a chore. Yet it contributes to our knowledge of Carlyle's thought in several respects. First, the doctrine of natural supernaturalism, applied to the historic past and illuminating its great worth, plainly demands to be applied to present-day aspects of man and society. Second, Carlyle's growing interest in history and historiography can be traced in the introductory chapter as well as in the offshoot essay "On History." His aesthetic allegiance to literature has become very shaky. The nature of literature is both religious ("the earliest and noblest product of man's spiritual nature") and sociological ("a grand index and agent of our progress"). Its function is to inspire and sustain the deep and mysterious powers of man's imagination, as against the logical powers. Though the heart and soul of literature is poetry, it will not be long before Carlyle is insisting that the only

poetry is history. Third, he has developed a concept of world literature, partly, no doubt, in justification of his limited subject, but partly also because through his own experience he realized its merits. The history of a nation's literature, he asserts, reveals better than anything else "the essential life of a nation." A series of such histories would still further provide "insight into the whole living phenomenon" and advance international understanding. "Surely the time will come," he writes, "when nations instead of regarding themselves as natural enemies, will find that they are natural friends . . . that we are all brothers and fellow-soldiers engaged, as our fathers have been and our sons will be, in one mighty ever-enduring warfare against Necessity and Evil, and that all other war is but madness and wicked mutiny."

Professor Shine's editing of the manuscript deserves high praise. The notes are copious, the introduction just and thorough in treating such pertinent matters as British interest in German literature before 1830, the history of Carlyle's studies in German literature, the description and history of the manuscript, and an evaluation of the work. Together, the introduction and notes cover 83 pages, which against the 87 pages of the text might seem a little out of proportion. The notes, moreover, do not so much explain the meaning of the text as track down the history of certain ideas and allusions in Carlyle's writings. The emphasis is everywhere on Carlyle rather than on the work itself. If David Hume is mentioned, we are offered a history of Carlyle's acquaintance with Hume. When some words of Goethe's are quoted in passing, a page-and-a-half-long note gives us a statistical accounting of Carlyle's allusions to Goethe and Goethe's works in his previous writings. This too might seem an improper emphasis. But neither objection holds, for Shine's method is fully justified by the special nature of the fragment. In this, more than in any of Carlyle's other works, we see Carlyle emerging from anxious inquiry and doubt, unwilling to perform any more literary hackwork, and at last certain that he has something to say to his contemporaries and can find a way to say it.

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DER GRAL IN WOLFRAMS PARZIVAL. ENTSTEHUNG UND AUSBILDUNG DER GRALSAGE IM HOCHMITTELALTER. By Bodo Mergell. Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1952. v, 176 p. (Sonderabdruck aus Band 73 und 74 der Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur.)

Professor Mergell closes this study with a quotation from Wilhelm Scherer which I will paraphrase and slightly reduce in translation. In art there are often additional results of which the artist is not aware in his conscious mind and which he did not prepare beforehand. The critic will not depart from the artist's intent if he attempts to discover all such experiences, but it is probable that he cannot always distinguish between conscious and unconscious purposes and between intentional and unintentional effort. Masterpieces are a mingling of manifold associations. In poetry one follows the direction of the line with delight, and who can say what the poet himself had in mind. He must be given our confidence. Nothing is achieved in art without effort, and behind each bit of beauty one must fathom the artist's thought.

This definition of critical procedure is not a new one for most of us; in fact, it is at the root of modern criticism. But there is a danger when it is coupled with historical study of sources. Subjective analysis can hardly be trusted when we strive to learn how such master poems as the *Tristan* of Gottfried and the *Parzival* of Wolfram were conceived and developed. Professor Mergell confesses (pp.

iii-iv) that the time is not yet ripe for a completely new picture, since too many details relating to the Grail theme remain to be solved. Since 1950 the author has been concerned with laying groundwork for such a comprehensive appreciation, but unless some lucky discovery from material now lost comes to hand I doubt that we can even contemplate the complete study which he has in mind. It is with some sadness, tinged with astonishment, that we see Professor Mergell building his foundations on the detail researches of Philip August Becker, W. Kellermann, Etienne Gilson, A. Birch-Hirschfeld, K. Burdach, and Jean Marx. One has only to read the reviews and the vast amount of literature on the subject to realize that these authorities have not agreed among themselves on some of the elemental premises. How can the author claim with any certainty that the *Estoire* of Robert de Boron is earlier than the *Conte del Graal* of Chrétien? This is his principal contention in Tafel IV (p. 118). Very few people have accepted this idea. Certainly W. A. Nitze has not done so. Elsewhere, in an aesthetic appreciation of the Tristan theme, Professor Mergell was obliged to take the position that the original Tristan *estoire* was the work of Chrétien and that there was no background of Cornish or Pictish material. This is contradicted by most Tristan scholars today. An attempt to make a synthesis of the themes of Tristan and the Grail should be made with extreme hesitation. The details involved are shrouded in even more obscurity than some authorities would have us believe.

While reading this sensitive and carefully planned monograph I made a point of rereading significant sections of Wolfram's text. I was impressed by some of the inadequacies of the currently accepted interpretations. For instance, the Grail stone "ez was ein grânât jâchant" (233, 20). Has any critic investigated this further? To one accustomed to the study of gems the garnet-jacinth is the essonite or cinnamon stone which, in the language of chemistry, is a lime-aluminum-garnet.[1] These orange red stones, which can be cut in large sizes, are very beautiful when translucent. I have noted in some commentaries that the *grânât jâchant* of Wolfram is explained as a red garnet with bluish tints. The originator of this knew nothing of gemmology; the garnet never occurs in a bluish tint. He must have thought that all garnets were red and added the blue tint to conform with the wild hyacinth flower. The meaning of this essonite Grail stone should be meditated upon before the author of the present monograph combines in his own imagination, and in that of Wolfram, the concept of the stone in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream with a stone in the legend of Alexander the Great.

Professor Mergell's study is a fine example of an aesthetic synthesis, but his conclusions will not be widely accepted. The most successful part of the book is the comparison of Wolfram's *Parzival* with his *Willehalm*. Beyond any doubt the creative imagination of an artist adheres to some constant patterns. Among the romances of Chrétien de Troyes there are resemblances of plot and character.[2] The Feirefiz *(Vair filz?)* of Wolfram probably owes something to the pagan Renewart in the Old French *Chançun de Willame*.[3]

In conclusion, it may be said that a feeling for spiritual uplift and comprehen-

[1] Information on this can be found in Kraus and Holden, *Gems and Gem Materials* (New York, 1931), or in Herbert P. Whitlock, *The Story of the Gems* (New York, 1936). In the Morgan Hall of the American Museum of Natural History there is a beautiful carved piece of essonite.

[2] William S. Woods of Tulane University discussed this in a paper at the Modern Language Association in 1951.

[3] The color *vair* in Old French meant "bluish grey." Perhaps a pagan who was of slightly dark complexion might have been described in this way. There is a place name in France, Roquesvaires, where the surrounding rocks are unquestionably of the tint mentioned.

sion of the structure of a master poem, expressed in architectural terminology, can contribute much to our appreciation, even where the genesis of the work continues to be shrouded in obscurity.

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THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF ANONYMA AND PSEUDONYMA. By Archer Taylor and Fredric J. Mosher. Chicago: Published for the Newberry Library by the University of Chicago Press, 1951. 289 p.

This is a history and handbook that will be repeatedly consulted. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Mosher deal primarily with homonyms, Latinized names, psuedepigrapha, anonyma, and pseudonyma in Western Europe. They sketch the development of fashions of disguised authorship and describe procedures used to establish the identity of authors. Oriental literature, fictitious publishers, dates, and places of publication, and confusing titles are treated briefly. A detailed bibliography of guides for identifying anonyma and pseudonyma, filling some seventy pages, is probably the best compilation on this particular problem that has yet been published.

Simple lists of homonyms, for the identification of persons bearing the same name, appeared even in classical times. In the sixteenth century, when doctrine depended more and more on the written text, theologians began to make systematic investigation of pseudepigrapha. It was important that texts be verified as the actual work of the persons whose name they bore. In carrying out this task, certain rules of evidence were established which have been used ever since.

Early in the Renaissance it was common for authors to write under Latinized names. A number of rules, designed to facilitate the translation of names into Latin, were formulated and published. Yet few authors appear to have followed them. It thus became difficult or impossible for a reader to guess just who these authors were, and it became necessary to publish lists identifying them. Somewhat later, for political reasons, anonyma and peudonyma came into common use. Again the need for positive identification called forth numerous lists which attempted to reveal disguised authorship. Finally, the first real reference tool for handling anonyma and pseudonyma appeared in 1708—Placcius, *Theatrum Anonymorum et Pseudonymorum*, in which evidence and authority are so arranged as to make the work more usable than previous compilations.

Since the time of Placcius the practical needs of booksellers and librarians in cataloging their holdings has greatly extended the knowledge of anonyma and pseudonyma, and we now have at our disposal numerous works like those of Brunet, Quérard, and Cushing (to mention only a few) and, in addition, the great library catalogs, which incorporate the results of intensive research by their staffs.

The authors of this book have given us an interesting historical survey, as well as an extremely useful tool.

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JULIUSZ SŁOWACKI. 1809-1949. KSIĘGA ZBIOROWA W STULECIE ZGONU. THE CENTENARY VOLUME. London: Polish Research Centre, Ltd., 1951. 448 p.

In the Paris of 1849, asylum of the subversive élite driven from the European monarchies, Julius Slowacki concluded a meteoric career. A cranky refugee to

some of his hosts, a national prophet to most of his countrymen, he appears to posterity chiefly as a poet whose technique was fifty years ahead of his time and touched all the registers from Byronic romanticism to Symbolism and Surrealism. In the London of 1949, the asylum of the victims of another Unholy Alliance, a group of exiled scholars and critics from Julius Slowacki's country joined with colleagues in other nations in appraising Slowacki's place in the national heritage and in world literature. The *Centenary Volume*, published in 1951, assembles twenty-four studies, including essays on various phases of his work, comparative studies, some items of "Slowackiana," a verse translation, and a bibliography.

There is a peculiar aptness in the presentation of this reappraisal during the immediate aftermath of another national catastrophe. But the intellectual isolation of exile, and the separation of the scholar from his tools, make for historical analogies so close as to be conducive to neurosis. Slowacki the mystical seer and interpreter of Polish destiny might well have loomed up once again before rapt disciples at the expense of Slowacki the poet. This pitfall is on the whole successfully avoided by the contributors, whose high scholarship, with one or two exceptions, is unaffected by the psychological strains of the occasion.

Michal Pawlikowski's essay in Polish on "The *King-Spirit* as a Monument of Latin Civilization" analyzes the Latinity of the *King-Spirit* in the light of the briefly explained tenets of his philosophy of civilization. However, Pawlikowski's harsh antithesis between the collective social ethic of Latin Christianity, which to him is the essence of Occidental civilization, and a narcissistic individualism, whose more repellent aberrations he apportions evenly between the Russian and Teutonic mentalities, is seriously warped by a political neurosis that has no place in literary criticism. For example, his gratuitous tilt at Faust as a literary figure hits off that troubled spirit about as felicitously as a Moscow production making short work of Hamlet as a case history of capitalistic maladjustment: "Who after all is this Faust? No one with a wholesome moral sense will deny that he is a common—or uncommon—malefactor, a frivolous seducer, who continues on his quest of fortune after his crime and Gretchen's death. A character whom nothing can justify . . . " Faust is *gerichtet*, apparently. Moreover, the trail of philosophical responsibility alleged to lead from Faust to Nazi bestiality seems dim indeed. Goethe, of course, has usually fared ill at the hands of romantics, especially the *types croyants* among them. But romanticism itself, which is of the essence of Slowacki's poetic make-up and at some level enters into all his output, is treated by Pawlikowski as a peculiarly Teutonic effluence of that moral nihilism shared by the "Asiatic" psyches of Germany and Russia. There has been a tendency, recurrent in Polish letters since Mickiewicz's meeting with Goethe, to see in Goethe only the facile Olympian. Pawlikowski's arresting judgment is evidence of a more perverse attempt to depict him as a proto-Nietzsche, bent over his witches' cauldron far beyond the illumined circle of Latin sanity, stirring up bubbles of Hunnish amorality.

The more Schillerian cast of the Polish mind, with its generous sacrificial fervor in philosophy and in action, has always immunized the Poles against the ivory-tower Goethe, the cool virtuoso clad in the armor of the Philistine. A passage from "Poeta i Natchnienie," poorly translated ad hoc, may suffice to hint at the type of poetic temperament most antagonistic to the Goethe who fiddled (for the squire and his relations) while the Holy Roman Empire burned:

> "... Ere I intone my country's dirge,
> Though lethal shades around her throng,
> My voice shall stir her pinion's urge,
> Shall speed her forth on wings of song,

Rush her aloft with tempest surge,
Burst chains and nets that held her long,
Lift her skyward to God, to the blazing core
And let go . . . if she's alive, she'll soar."

This polarity is obvious and well-attested, but not only in Slavic or Latin reactions to Goethe. It divides variant types of individual moral temper but it should not be equated with the quite different gulf between superman amorality and Christian Latinity—let alone clouded with racial philosophies of history. The power and profundity of what might be termed the Indo-European ethos in Slowacki's *Król-Duch*—rather than its Latinity—is what Pawlikowski is really celebrating in his sensitive essay. In that sense the *King-Spirit* is a towering monument of the Occidental spirit. So is Faust.

Miss Maryla Falk takes the *King-Spirit* as the principal vehicle for a penetrating study of Indian elements in Slowacki's thought. It is doubtless the most ambitious and, on the whole, successful attempt to date to outline for an English-speaking public the cosmic saga of the Polish spirit and trace its multiple links with Buddhism. Ever since the discovery of Sanskrit literature, Brahmanic and Buddhist wisdom has fascinated Western poets and thinkers as different as Schlegel and Schopenhauer, Gjellerup and Lafcadio Hearn. Buddhist soterial thought struck Slowacki with the force of a revelation. He did not so much adhere to it as find in it the most singular confirmation of his own mystical world view, which had already begun to take epic shape in the earlier cantos of the *King-Spirit*. To point out this kinship of thought throughout the work is simple. It is less easy to segregate convincingly the elements of original Slowackian *mystique* from the effects of Buddhist influence. A rather awesome phraseology is difficult to avoid when dealing with Buddhist philosophy, and frequently the reader's head swims with an overdose of "ancillary ectypes," "salvific agencies," and the like. Slowacki's study of Indian writings revealed to him many coincidences in the folk customs and rites of ancient Poland and Aryan India. These led him deeper into speculations on comparative anthropology than would be good for the sanity of a latter-day Indo-Europeanist. They make, however, supreme poetry and fortunately can be read as that alone.

Claude Backvis' article, in French, on "Slowacki et l'héritage baroque" comes the closest to filling a basic need—that of placing the Polish classics within the context of European literature. For a variety of reasons, non-Polish scholars of Romanic affiliations would seem best qualified for this task, which after a hundred years still awaits accomplishment. The thoroughness, lucidity, and warmth of M. Backvis' treatment makes one wish that he might undertake a work of larger scope, but on an introductory level, on the Polish romantic period, for which non-Polish materials are woefully inadequate.

Zygmunt Nowakowski presents an eminently readable account of the theatrical fortunes of Slowacki's dramas, with a wealth of information assembled under inauspicious circumstances. Zygmunt Markiewicz in a more specialized essay on Slowacki as a dramatist, examines French influences on him during the decade of his most active dramatic creation. Jerzy Pietrkiewicz's admirable analysis of Slowacki's metaphors is a model of its kind, precise, well-documented, and refreshingly free from preciousness and esoteric jargon.

The volume would have gained in effectiveness if it had been introduced by an orientation article setting forth the essentials of Poland's political and literary history, and Slowacki's place therein.

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THE VICTORIAN CONSCIENCE. By Clarence R. Decker. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1952. 213 p.

Clarence Decker, president of the University of Kansas City, has produced, under the title *The Victorian Conscience*, a luminous history of British literary taste during the long reign of "good" Queen Victoria. His exploration into English attitudes on matters moral reveals a pattern far more complex than the unqualified contempt of such early twentieth-century social critics as Strachey and Amy Lowell. The superficial and now trite dismissal of the entire period under the stamp of Mrs. Grundy takes into account only what is most mediocre in a period which was one of the most richly endowed with literary genius. Most of the great writers of the long span of years were, in varying degrees, restive under the repressive forces which the age experienced in the name of respectability. Dickens, Thackeray, Meredith, Eliot, Butler, Gissing, Swinburne, Moore, Hardy all are protesters. Thackeray complained: "Since the author of 'Tom Jones' was buried, no writer among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost powers a man . . . Society will not tolerate the Natural in Art." But Thackeray, in the main, buckled down to work in the taste of his day, whereas some others, such as Butler and Moore, daringly faced censure and unpopularity by overstepping the invisible line. In Samuel Butler's *Way of All Flesh*, written between 1873 and 1884, though first appearing only in 1903, we come upon a curious omission in this discussion upon the battle against Victorianism. Butler's largely autobiographical and strongly satirical novel is forthright and thoroughgoing in its attack upon the central institutions of Victorianism—the family, the school, and the church. It sets a style which the chief debunkers have followed, from Shaw onwards. Mr. Decker's design, of course, turns his eyes mainly from the native novel to the criticism offered in greeting the foreign importations.

The franker pursuit of reality came to England from the continent, chiefly at first from France, then from Russia and Scandinavia. A careful sampling of British reactions to the successive importations of Balzac, Baudelaire, Zola and his confreres, Ibsen, and the Russians gives Mr. Decker his basic organization. Each of these new arrivals was an alarm to call forth the apprehensions of the conservative and the cautious or more daring admiration of more liberal spirits. The study, accordingly, follows primarily the rise of naturalism and is complicated late in the century by the "art for art's sake" reaction against both naturalism and conventional Victorian restrictiveness.

For each of the major innovators from abroad, the author assembles an imposing array of critical reactions. In each instance, it is the story of initial shock and violent opposition, followed by appreciation and acceptance; in each, the forces of conservatism and moral earnestness, after an initial flurry, go down before a new liberal attitude. In his progression from what Decker designates "The Mantling Blush" of early Victorian days, which looked askance even at some of the early Dickens, to "The New Spirit," beginning to be felt in the last years of the queen's reign, it becomes increasingly evident that the simple formulas applied to the period heretofore are inadequate, and that there was in the Victorian day a receptivity among the men of stature for stronger meat and franker attitudes and more complete truth. The author ventures the opinion that future critics will look upon the era as one of the great productive ages in our literature, an opinion which it is high time we recognized.

Mr. Decker has in the main managed very well the difficult problem of handling objectively the divergent views of other times. Complete objectivity is difficult in treating an age still so near and so related by way of reaction to our own. And, in

point of fact, there does remain a sense in which the author has not wholly abstracted himself from the prejudices of his own time, if indeed anyone can. Measurement requires some standard; and, if we accept the norm of our own age in this case, we are measuring in terms of the reaction, for anti-Victorianism is still very much a force. The ultimacy of our own tastes, literary and otherwise, is no more to be assumed than those of any past age, and perhaps even less so, since we are operating under the stress of such unsettling influences as relativism, the Freudian psychology (together with the Kinsey Report), not to mention world social revolution. We may suppose that current amoral attitudes and the hypersexualization of fiction will, from the view of a century hence, seem as far afield as the prudery charged to a century ago.

The Victorians were not, as many of their critics seem to suppose, simply eccentric and perverse and hypocritical in their attachment to decency and respectability. They were, of course, reacting to the attitudes of the Napoleonic era, which had been notoriously godless and morally irresponsible. *Vanity Fair* is a reconstruction of that time, and it is a picture of a society "living without God in the world." Victorian attempts to elevate the moral tone, however much associated with the much maligned middle class, to which incidentally, for better or worse, most of us belong, was a reasonable and even laudable undertaking. It was at least as praiseworthy as the cult of unrespectability and the reduction of all behavior to sensual impulse, and as near to the balance of truth. The battle for freedom was a necessary one and often valiantly fought, but one wonders how far reaction can proceed in casting aside the regulative forces of convention and morality. Milton's plea for liberty was not a countenancing of irresponsibility.

All of which is not to question the essential validity of Mr. Decker's picture of the birth throes of liberal attitudes in the nineteenth century. His treatment is orderly, fresh, thorough, well-documented. He has an eye and an ear for the phrase which clings to the mind and symbolizes a concept: "Frail, French and Thirty," "The Maiden Tribute," etc. His book is attractively illustrated with cartoons of the era which visualize the attitudes. The style is readable and attractive, and does not bog down under the weight of his numerous quotations.

I can agree that this is a manual "necessary to be had" by all scholars of the period, but I find its greatest value, not as a guidebook to dark ages, but as a testimony to the eternally fluctuating nature of literary tastes under the stimulating impact of fresh cultural forces. Here, as more frequently than we have been accustomed to realize, these forces are what we comprehend as "comparative literature." Less and less does a people live to itself; even the self-sufficient Victorian society in the tight little isle could not remain unaware of, and unresponsive to, the world of thought developing on the continent. We need more studies of this sort to illustrate how far our literary movements have been qualified by other cultures.

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VARIA

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Renaissance Society of America has recently been organized with a view to integrating the various types of history of the period—art, literature, music, philosophy, science, politics, religion, etc. It is felt that only when this principle of integration is fully recognized, can scholars bring into focus the meaning and significance of the intellectual and artistic achievements of the Renaissance. Interested persons are invited to communicate with Professor Josephine Waters Bennett, 200 East 66th Street, New York 21, N.Y.

A Conference on Oriental-Western Literary and Cultural Relations will be held June 28-July 2, 1954 on the campus of Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. The discussions will deal primarily with literature and the arts. For information write to the Comparative Literature Office at Indiana University.

CL is pleased to call to the attention of our Spanish and Japanese readers the recent translations of René Wellek and Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature*. They are, respectively: *Teoría literaria*, tr. José M. Gimeno Capella, con prólogo español de Dámaso Alonso, Madrid, Editorial Gredos, 1953; and *Bun-gaku no ri-on*, tr. Saburo Ota, Tokyo, Chi-kuma, 1954.